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**The U.S. Foreign Service in Italy and the Byington Family  
Consular Dynasty in Naples (1897-1973)**

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Presentata da: Brendan Connors

Coordinatore Dottorato: Prof.ssa Cecilia Tasca

Tutor/Relatore: Prof. Marco Pignotti

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“In all of his relations with the government to which he has been accredited the envoy must bear in mind constantly that the principal object of his mission is the maintenance of cordial relations between the two states.”<sup>1</sup> - Graham H. Stuart

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<sup>1</sup> G.H. Stuart, *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952, p. 192.

## Introduction

The American Foreign Service officers, (career diplomats and consuls), who specialized in Italian affairs in the middle third of the Twentieth Century have largely been relegated to the status of a historical footnote in studies of the relations between the United States and Italy.<sup>2</sup> The few works that have touched upon their activities have tended to focus on the Italian elections of 1948 such as Roberto Faenza and Marco Fini (1976) and more recently, Deborah Kisatsky (2005), while Kaeten Mistry (2009) has termed the activities of Ambassador James Dunn as “political warfare”.<sup>3</sup> In addition, Emanuele Bernardi (2006) has analyzed the differences of opinion inside the Rome embassy in the late 1940s with regard to agrarian reform while Gentiloni-Silveri (1998) and Nuti (1999) have commented on the role played by Foreign Service officers in the years leading up to the socialist participation in Aldo Moro’s first government formed in December 1963.<sup>4</sup> Still, the vital characteristics of American

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<sup>2</sup> Some of the many fundamental works on the relations between the United States and Italy in the post-World War II period are: A. Brogi *L’Italia e l’egemonia americana nel mediterraneo*, Florence, La Nuova Italia, 1996; M. Del Pero, *L’Alleato Scomodo: Gli Stati Uniti e la Democrazia Cristiana negli anni del centrismo, 1948-1955*, Rome, Carocci, 2001; E. Di Nolfo, “Italia e Stati Uniti: un’alleanza diseguale”, *Storia delle relazioni internazionali*, a. VI, n.1, 1990; A. Giovagnoli, *L’Italia nel nuovo ordine mondiale: politica ed economica dal 1945 al 1947*, Milan, Vita e Pensiero, 2000; J.L. Harper, *L’America e la ricostruzione dell’Italia (1945-1948)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987; J. Miller, *The United States and Italy, 1940-1950: The Politics and Diplomacy of Stabilization*, Chapel Hill, North Carolina University Press, 1984; L. Wollemborg, *Stelle, Strisce e tricolore: Trent’anni di vicende politiche fra Roma e Washington*, Milan, Mondadori, 1983.

<sup>3</sup> R. Faenza, M. Fini, *Gli Americani in Italia*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1976; D. Kisatsky, *The United States and the European Right 1945-1955*, Ohio State University Press, 2005; K. Mistry, *The United States, Italy, and the Origins of Cold War: Waging Political Warfare 1945-1950*, Cambridge University Press, 2014; K. Mistry, “The Dynamics of Postwar US-Italian Relations, American Interventionism and the role of James C. Dunn” in *Ricerche di storia politica*, 2/2009.

<sup>4</sup> See E. Bernardi, *La riforma agraria in Italia e gli Stati Uniti: Guerra fredda, Piano Marshall e interventi per il Mezzogiorno negli anni del centrismo degasperiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2006; U. Gentiloni-Silveri, *L’Italia e la nuova frontiera: Stati Uniti e centro-sinistra (1958-1965)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1998; L. Nuti, *Gli Stati Uniti e l’apertura a sinistra: Importanza e limiti della presenza americana in Italia*, Rome, Laterza, 1999.

diplomatic representation as identified by Heinrichs (1966), Weil (1978), and De Santis (1980) have been ignored in the Italian context.<sup>5</sup>

This thesis focuses on the role played by American Foreign Service officers in Italy, mostly from the Fascist era to the Cold War (1929-1953). Of particular note is the Byington family dynasty at the U.S. Consulate General in Naples which lasted, with interruptions, from 1897 to 1973. More specifically, due to a particular cultural and social formation which both reflected and differed from that of his colleagues, Homer M. Byington Jr., (1908-1987) became the Foreign Service's foremost expert on Italy in the Cold War, serving an astounding 21 years in that country.<sup>6</sup> This remarkable continuity allowed Byington to establish a vast network of social and political contacts in both Italian government and military circles and the concomitant Roman and Neapolitan aristocracies. This thesis will demonstrate that these ties led to his involvement in several of the most important moments of contemporary Italian history such as the lead-up to the Munich Conference of 1938, the institutional referendum of June 2, 1946, the elections of April 18, 1948, and almost assuredly the aborted 1970 *coup d'état* led by Prince Junio Valerio Borghese.

The role played by the Rome embassy in the post-World War II armistice regime as one element in the complex overlapping triangle of Allied authorities on Italian territory is a significant theme present in the work. In this context, the figure of Admiral Ellery Stone as

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<sup>5</sup> De Santis provides a detailed analysis of American diplomatic representation to the Soviet Union in the same time period covered by this thesis: H. De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence: The American Foreign Service, The Soviet Union, and the Cold War, 1933-1947*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1980.

<sup>6</sup> In the United States there are relatively few works of history, or books of general interest, that have American diplomats as their protagonists. The research of Italian scholars has touched upon the American diplomats as actors in a particular context but has largely neglected their social and cultural formation. For the pre-World War II period see: M. Weil, *A Pretty Good Club, the Founding Fathers of the U.S. Foreign Service*, New York, Norton, 1978; W. Heinrichs, *American Ambassador: Joseph Grew and the Development of United States Diplomatic Tradition*, Boston, Little Brown & Company, 1966; J. Moskin, *American Statecraft: The Story of the U.S. Foreign Service*, New York, Thomas Dunne Books, 2013. For the post-war period see: K. Weisbrode. *The Atlantic Century: Four Generations of Extraordinary Diplomats who Forged America's Vital Alliance with Europe*, Boston, Da Capo Press, 2009; E. Thomas e W. Isaacson, *The Wise Men: Six Friends and the World They Made*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 2012. Other useful references are G.H. Stuart, *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*, Second Ed., New York, Appleton-Century Crofts, 1952; G.H. Stuart, *The Department of State: A History of its Organization, Procedure, and Personnel*, New York, MacMillan, 1949; S.F. Bemis, *The American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy*, New York, Cooper Square Publishers, 1970.

President of the Allied Commission is analyzed. Lastly, the changing relationship between the embassy and the Naples Consulate General, the two key elements of American representation in Italy, will be analyzed.

The dispatches sent from Rome and Naples to the State Department constitute a crucial source of official information. Still, a thorough consultation of additional sources is necessary in order to read between the lines of government documents.<sup>7</sup> In addition to the diaries and correspondence of American Ambassadors Breckinridge Long and William Phillips, newspaper archives on both sides of the Atlantic document the social milieu inhabited by the diplomats. A biography of the Foreign Service officer Homer M. Byington Jr., *The Sum of Perishable Things*, documents his worldview and facilitates the reconstruction of his social and official networks in Italy from 1934 to 1973.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, the unpublished manuscript biography of Coert Du Bois, American Consul General in Naples is fundamental in determining the image of the Fascist regime created by the supervisor of all American consulates in Italy from 1931-1936. Finally, oral interviews available at Columbia University and the Library of Congress (the latter group largely conducted by the retired Foreign Service officer Charles Stuart Kennedy), provide further insight into the diplomats' interpretation of both fascism and the post-war Italian Republic.<sup>9</sup> The author would like to express his gratitude to Homer M. Byington III who graciously spared his time to answer questions regarding the life and times of his father: Homer M. Byington Jr. A special thanks also to Marco Pignotti who offered encouragement and followed the project from its beginnings and to Luci Fortunato for having read and commented on the draft version.

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<sup>7</sup> Of particular use is RG 84 of NARA (Records from Foreign Service posts) instead of the more frequently cited RG 59 Department of State records.

<sup>8</sup> See: H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, Foster, RI, Privately Published, 2010.

<sup>9</sup> The ADST interviews are available at the Library of Congress. Along with W.D. Morgan, Kennedy has also written two short educational works on the activities of the Foreign Service. See: W. D. Morgan e C.S. Kennedy, *The U.S. Consul at Work*, Westport, CT, Greenwood Press, 1991; W. D. Morgan e C.S. Kennedy, *American Diplomats at Work*, New York, Universe, 2004.

## Prologue - The Professionalization of American Diplomacy

The United States had already become a major industrial power by the turn of the Twentieth Century. Still, it maintained only 41 diplomatic missions overseas (embassies and legations) and 318 consulates.<sup>10</sup> The State Department of the executive branch which oversaw this unwieldy network employed just 91 officials including the Secretary of State.<sup>11</sup> The lack of emphasis on foreign relations was indicative of the American tendency toward isolation from European affairs, a tradition dating back to George Washington's Farewell Address and reaffirmed by the Monroe Doctrine of 1823. Moreover, in the Nineteenth Century world divided into great empires, the number of sovereign nations with which to establish diplomatic relations was rather limited.<sup>12</sup> American interest in foreign affairs grew at the turn of the Twentieth Century for several reasons: the fulfillment of Manifest Destiny to the Pacific Coast, the Spanish-American War, the increased speed of travel and communications, the wave of European emigration toward the United States and booming Transatlantic commerce. As a manifestation of this new spirit, American colonies developed in major European capitals such as London, Paris, and Rome and each year thousands of wealthy American tourists traveled to the Old Continent.

Operating since 1792 under supervision of the State Department, the independent American Consular Service was charged with facilitating commercial enterprise, granting immigration visas, and protecting the interests of Americans traveling abroad. In the Nineteenth Century, it was common practice for Americans with legal training living overseas to serve as honorary consuls. By the time of World War I, successful applicants for the official Consular Service were well-versed in "business law, maritime law, international law, history of the United States and of the world, mathematics as far as algebra, and either the French, German, or

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<sup>10</sup> K. Weisbrode. *The Atlantic Century: Four Generations of Extraordinary Diplomats who Forged America's Vital Alliance with Europe*, Boston, Da Capo Press, 2009, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> H. Kopp, *Foreign Service, Civil Service: How We Got to Where We Are*, in "The Foreign Service Journal", Volume 91 n.5, May 2014, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup> For example, the United States did not maintain an embassy in British India.

Spanish language.”<sup>13</sup> While many consuls had graduated from public universities, new candidates without university experience were not automatically rejected. One such candidate, Coert Du Bois, passed the entrance examination in 1918 and eventually played a significant role in the relations between the United States and Italy. Consular officials were not well-compensated but recuperated funds through fees imposed on visa applications and certificates of citizenship and the career was generally considered a respectable middle class position for men who wanted to live abroad.<sup>14</sup> Still, compared to an appointment as an embassy secretary or ambassador, the social perception of a consul was that of “small coin” which “served as rewards and incomes for minor politicians”, and the meagre income was often increased through swindling.<sup>15</sup>

Differently than their consular counterparts, candidates seeking to enter the career Diplomatic Service of the State Department in the first decades of the Twentieth Century were often bonded by a shared worldview formed in private boarding schools and had studied at prestigious East Coast universities such as Yale or Harvard. This homogenous cultural, social, political, and religious formation was characteristic of the so-called White Anglo-Saxon Protestant Eastern Establishment. Among those who fit the bill were Joseph Grew (1880-1965) and William Phillips (1878-1968), both heirs of State Street (Boston) trust funds who rebelled against the prospect of an idle life as an heir.<sup>16</sup> Due to his father’s early death, Phillips was financially independent at the age of 21 and able to take a job as an unpaid secretary at the London Embassy in 1905. Phillips commented on his upbringing in a 1951 interview: “Boston in those days was a very limited community. The Boston that I grew up in was limited to friends who lived on the Hill and in the Back Bay district. The community was

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<sup>13</sup> Coert Du Bois papers - Box 2, Folder 30, Incomplete manuscript autobiography, p. 228.

<sup>14</sup> K. Weisbrode. *The Atlantic Century: Four Generations of Extraordinary Diplomats who Forged America’s Vital Alliance with Europe*, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> W. Heinrichs, *American Ambassador: Joseph C. Grew and the Development of the United States Diplomatic Tradition*, Boston, Little Brown & Company, 1966, p. 10.

<sup>16</sup> Weil, *A Pretty Good Club*, p. 19.

self-centered - we lived surrounded by cousins, uncles and aunts and there was no incentive to discuss national or world affairs.”<sup>17</sup>

Individual success in industry and finance led to a strong belief in laissez-faire economics based on the high degree of social mobility in the United States where the single individual could achieve financial success in spite of a modest family origin. The diplomats were also bonded by a strong sense of civic duty with an appreciation of the responsibilities of the citizen in the republic as outlined by Theodore Roosevelt. “By virtue of their rearing and education, diplomats were imbued with American cultural values and beliefs and a liberal-internationalist concept of world affairs which espoused the harmony of interests among nations and emphasized the ideals of free trade, political self-determination, and the inviolability of public opinion.”<sup>18</sup>

As future ambassadors, Grew and Phillips largely renounced income from their prospective position for American ambassadors overseas were not compensated for the large expenses of diplomatic social functions such as luncheons and dinners.<sup>19</sup> The necessity to rely upon one’s own conspicuous funds as ambassador reduced the pool of potential diplomats who could perform a satisfactory social representation to a small privileged portion of the general population. This is confirmed by the case of the professor David Jayne Hill, Theodore Roosevelt’s ambassador in Berlin, who was recalled in 1911 because he lacked the means necessary to manage the social functions of the embassy.<sup>20</sup> A *New York Times* article from 1929 observed that “some of our representatives in London and Paris have had to spend from \$50,000 to \$100,000 a year out of their own pockets to make up for the inadequate

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<sup>17</sup> William Phillips interview with Wendell H. Link, July 1951, Columbia University.

<sup>18</sup> H. De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence: The American Foreign Service, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War, 1933-1947*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1979, p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> Grew would eventually serve as U.S. ambassador to Denmark (1920-1921), Switzerland (1921-1924), Turkey (1927-1932), and Japan (1932-1941). He was also twice Under Secretary of State 1924-1927 and 1944-1945. Phillips was U.S. ambassador to Belgium (1924-1927), Canada (1927-1929), and Italy (1936-1941) and had two stints as Under Secretary of State (1922-1924) and (1933-1936).

<sup>20</sup> K. Weisbrode, *The Atlantic Century*, p. 4.

compensation given them by the government.”<sup>21</sup> Ironically, career diplomats discouraged an increase in their own compensation because it might open the door to the non-wealthy to join their ranks and dilute the quality of the service.

London and Paris were the most desirable positions in the diplomatic world as recalled by William Phillips who had served as a private secretary at the former in 1905: “Those were the days when London was the center of the world politically, financially, economically and in a sense socially. The representatives of the British Empire, the members of the Government and of the diplomatic corps were all prominent in London society and mingled together on all great occasions in the vast historic mansions.”<sup>22</sup> The historical formal traditions of European diplomatic society, which centered around royal courts, constituted the time-tested method of conducting international relations. Therefore, American diplomats found it necessary to adapt to these preexisting norms and adopted genteel social graces. Few in number and distant from their place of origin, the diplomats established close relations among themselves and with their European counterparts. In the case of Joseph Grew, “prolonged service in Europe introduced him to the freemasonry of European professionals who tended to develop a corporate identity apart from their national identity.”<sup>23</sup> European foreign offices were often staffed by the scions of influential landowning families and although a titled nobility did not exist in the United States, diplomats of all nations shared a fear of social upheaval. In general, diplomats of both Democratic and Republican leanings strongly opposed populism. The writer Martin Weil notes that for the diplomats in the 1920s and 1930s “The regal splendor and pomp of prewar European court society represented the golden age of civilization. [...] The actual business of diplomacy often seemed merely an agreeable accompaniment to the pleasures of membership in an international society of elegance and sophistication.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> “Ambassador to Italy”, *New York Times*, August 2, 1929, p.11.

<sup>22</sup> William Phillips interview with Wendell H. Link, July 1951, Columbia University.

<sup>23</sup> W. Heinrichs, *American Ambassador: Joseph Grew and the Development of United States Diplomatic Tradition*, p. 96.

<sup>24</sup> M. Weil, *A Pretty Good Club: The Founding Fathers of the U.S. Foreign Service*, p. 21.

Throughout the first two decades of the Twentieth Century American consular and diplomatic representation underwent a long-term process of professionalization which had its roots in the greater civil service reform of the 1880s. This process was codified by the Rogers Act of May 24, 1924, which created The Foreign Service of the United States, a semiautonomous organization under the aegis of the State Department. The law amalgamated the consular and diplomatic services: diplomats and consuls were now interchangeable. Henceforth, access to the Foreign Service was disciplined by an entrance examination and the organizational hierarchy managed through a promotion scale. According to the historian Graham Stuart, the Rogers Act “was not a radical departure in any respect but rather the culmination of a long struggle to take the Foreign Service definitely and permanently out of politics.”<sup>25</sup> The law was the brainchild of Assistant Secretary of State and Consular Supervisor, Wilbur J. Carr and the U.S. Representative from Massachusetts John Jacob Rogers. Carr in particular had been dismayed to find young American embassy secretaries speaking with a British accent upon traveling to London in 1916: “I have seen some of these young secretaries, who have had exceptional social opportunities and advantages in the capitals abroad, become the most abject followers of the social regime in the foreign capital. One of the things that I hope is going to follow from this bill is to send some of these de-Americanized secretaries to Singapore as vice consul, or to force them out of the service.”<sup>26</sup>

The new personnel system under the Rogers Act required that Foreign Service officers occasionally return for assignments in Washington D.C. to reacquaint themselves with American society. They would also be rotated to avoid long assignments in the same country to ensure that they would not adopt the mindset and mannerisms of the host society. Therefore, at least in theory, generalists were desired instead of experts on a particular country or subject matter. In practice, as we will see, the Foreign Service also needed specialists, particularly in the immediate aftermath of World War II as a result of the United States’

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<sup>25</sup> Stuart, *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*, p. 99.

<sup>26</sup> J. Moskin, *American Statecraft: The Story of the U.S. Foreign Service*, New York, Thomas Dunne Books, 2013, p. 347.

transition from a peripheral power to a primary actor on the European continent.<sup>27</sup> Prior to World War II, the centrality of Europe in international affairs assured that the path to influential positions both in the Foreign Service and in the larger State Department depended on a mastery of the relations between the major powers on the Old Continent and a knowledge of French language. Continuing through the Truman administration, the core of diplomatic social life in Washington D.C. was comprised by these Atlantic relationships. In July 1946 there remained 33 career officers who had entered the diplomatic corps before the Rogers Act of 1924. According to Selden Chapin, then Chief of Personnel of the Foreign Service: “Ninety-nine percent of these officers have a private income” while of the 175 consuls who entered prior to the Rogers Act “not more than 25% have private means.”<sup>28</sup>

In addition to career diplomats, many ambassadorial appointments by American presidents were rewards for politicians who had lost an election or financial contributors to the president’s electoral campaign. Assistant Secretary of State William Castle, who served on the Foreign Service examination board at the onset of the Hoover administration in 1929, believed that the political nominees did not perform adequately as ambassadors, and that it was consequently advantageous to American interests to send them to countries where heavy diplomatic lifting would not be necessary, thus reserving the difficult posts for career men.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, according to Castle, President Hoover was of the opinion that “there are lots of bad political appointees, but that political appointees do not need to be bad.”<sup>30</sup> This operating philosophy was evident in 1929 when Hoover nominated three bankers as ambassadors: former vice-president of the United States Charles Dawes (London), Walter Evans Edge (Paris), and John W. Garrett (Rome) although Garrett was an experienced diplomat.

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<sup>27</sup> FSO John Wesley Jones notes in an oral interview that when he entered the Foreign Service in 1930 there was an emphasis on generalists instead of specialists. ADST interview John Wesley Jones with Horace G. Torbert, May 11, 1988.

<sup>28</sup> “The U.S. Foreign Service”, in *Fortune*, July 1946, p. 198.

<sup>29</sup> William Castle Diary, Box 14, February 25, 1929.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

## Chapter One - The Foreign Service Prior to World War II, 1897-1938

### 1.1. The Byington Family's Neapolitan Vocation, 1897-1929

When considering some of the distinguished representatives linked to a particular country, beyond Alexander Kirk's ten years in Rome from 1928 to 1938, American envoys to Italy have not been examined by historians. This, however, does not indicate that there was no "Italian hand" equivalent to the roles played by George Kennan and Charles Bohlen regarding the Soviet Union or James Riddleberger in German affairs. In fact, the connection of the Byington family, originating in Norwalk, Connecticut, to the city of Naples lasted an astounding 75 years: (1897-1973).

Aaron Homer Byington was born in Herkimer, New York in 1826. After attending Amos Smith Collegiate School for Boys in New Haven, Connecticut, he began a career in the newspaper industry as an office boy at the *Norwalk Gazette*, eventually becoming the paper's business manager, and in 1848, its owner. He entered politics as a member of the Connecticut General Assembly in 1858 and lent his support to Abraham Lincoln's candidacy at the Republican Party's nominating convention of 1860.<sup>31</sup> In July 1863, while working for Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune*, Byington was the first reporter to deliver news of the outcome of the Battle of Gettysburg to the White House.<sup>32</sup> Thenceforth, he became an occasional guest of Lincoln's as a sort of court minstrel until the president's untimely death in 1865.

By 1880, after a long career in the newspaper industry, Byington was ready for a new adventure and sought a consulship overseas. As previously noted, consulships in the late Nineteenth Century political system were often rewards for minor politicians. In fact, according to the historian James Miller, Byington was "the emblem of the old style American

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<sup>31</sup> When the Civil War broke out in April 1861, Washington D.C. was left undefended. Byington became the first Connecticut man to enlist in the Cassius M. Clay battalion which protected the capital until Northern troops arrived. See: Letter from Connecticut Journalists to Gentlemen of the U.S. Senate. undated 1897, Byington Family papers, Box 1 Folder 6.

<sup>32</sup> In the Civil War diary of Gideon Welles, Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy recounts the story of A. Homer Byington who persuaded the Union troops to repair telegraph lines so that he could report the outcome of the battle.

representative: a successful businessman, well-connected politically, that desired the post to satisfy both his desire to live overseas and to serve his country.”<sup>33</sup> A teller of tall tales, Byington dubiously recounted that his consulship promised by President James A. Garfield did not come to fruition because on the day the latter was shot, July 2, 1881, a letter signed by Secretary of State James Blaine appointing him as U.S. Consul in Sheffield, England was found unsigned on the president’s desk.

By 1897, Byington sought “a release from his exceptionally long and exacting newspaper toil.”<sup>34</sup> On March 23 of that year Connecticut Governor Lorrin A. Cooke wrote a letter to President McKinley recommending him for a consulship.<sup>35</sup> Another letter of recommendation to the president came from Henry Van Ness Boynton who indicated that Byington’s preferences were Montreal, Belfast, or Glasgow: three choices that indicated a desire to carry out his activities in English language.<sup>36</sup> In the end, he was appointed as U.S. Consul in Naples; his two sons were perplexed regarding their father’s acceptance of the nomination; though energetic, Aaron Homer Byington was over 70 years old, had never been abroad, and did not speak Italian.<sup>37</sup>

In the late Nineteenth Century, American consuls were granted a large degree of administrative autonomy in part because the U.S. government provided meagre compensation, thus leaving the former responsible for financing the operation. Therefore, Byington decided to bring his 18 year old grandson, Homer M. Byington I to Naples to serve on his staff (Homer M. Byington I was born in 1879 in Washington D.C. and in this section is referred to as “young Homer”). A July 1, 1897, letter from Byington to his predecessor Frank A Deane, U.S.

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<sup>33</sup> J.E. Miller, “Dilettanti e professionisti: talento e fortuna nella diplomazia americana a Napoli” p. 60 in D. Spikes, *Stati Uniti a Napoli Rapporti consolari 1796-1996*, Naples, Filema,1996. See: Connecticut Journalists to Gentlemen of the U.S. Senate, undated 1897, Byington Family Papers, Box 1 Folder 6.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Cooke to McKinley, March 23, 1897, Byington Family Papers, Box 1 Folder 6.

<sup>36</sup> Boynton to McKinley, April 18, 1897, Byington Family Papers, Box 1, Folder 2. Henry Van Ness Boynton (1835-1905) served in the Union army in the Civil War and was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions at the Battle of Missionary Ridge.

<sup>37</sup> See: ADST Interview Jane Byington with Margaret Sullivan, March 8, 1989.

Consul in Naples from 1893 to 1897, indicated that young Homer would be coming to Naples and that he had no knowledge of Italian.<sup>38</sup> Byington asked Deane if there was a place available for his grandson until he could learn Italian, mentioning the steamship authority as a possibility.

Aaron Homer Byington was not wealthy and initially struggled to pay for the operation of the consulate which, under his tenure, moved from the corner of Santa Lucia and Salita dei Giganti to Piazza Municipio 4.<sup>39</sup> Shortly after his arrival in Italy, he reached out to his friend Robert Hitt, U.S. Representative from Ohio, to ask for an increase in compensation. For this the consul was rebuked by Connecticut Republican Representative Ebenezer J. Hill who wrote that it was “out of the question to increase compensation to Naples” (as a result of an interview with Mr. Hitt), and that a poor man “had no business to accept a place like Naples which hundreds of men would willingly spend thousands of dollars every year to take.”<sup>40</sup> Not dismayed by Hill’s rebuttal, Byington continued his letter-writing campaign in search of additional funds. A February 7, 1900, letter asked Charles A. Russell, another Connecticut congressman, to “aid and abet the State Department’s recommendation for an increase in clerical salary in Naples from \$480.00 to \$1800.00 in any consistent way you can as an act of right and justice as well as a favor to me.”<sup>41</sup> At this time there were two clerks in the consulate, the first (unnamed) was “constantly employed as Invoice Clerk and translator and interpreter of Italian, French, and German and his salary is \$280.00 per year. The other is my Grandson, in his 21st year, who is Consular Cashier, my Stenographer, Typewriter, and General Correspondence Clerk, and receives a sum of \$200.00 per year.”<sup>42</sup>

Grandfather’s advocacy continued, a letter to Connecticut Senator Orville H. Platt on February 10, 1903, suggested that young Homer be appointed to the position of U.S. Deputy

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<sup>38</sup> A.H. Byington to Frank A. Deane, July 1, 1897, Byington Family Papers, Box 1 Folder 7.

<sup>39</sup> J.E. Miller, “Dilettanti e professionisti: talento e fortuna nella diplomazia americana a Napoli”, pp. 55-56.

<sup>40</sup> Ebenezer J. Hill to A.H. Byington, January 13, 1899, Byington Family Papers, Box 1 Folder 38.

<sup>41</sup> A.H. Byington to Charles A. Russell, February 7, 1900, Byington Family Papers, Box 1 Folder 15.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

Consul General in Cairo to replace the dying Hubbard T. Smith.<sup>43</sup> The letter mentions that by 1903 young Homer had mastered Italian and French. Remarkably, from the age of 21 onward he was often left in charge of the consulate when his grandfather was on home leave or away for “week-long vacations to Ischia to enjoy the restorative sulphur baths.”<sup>44</sup> On these occasions young Homer visited Ischia to ask for advice or to obtain his grandfather’s signature on official documents. In addition to his consular duties, he was the Naples correspondent of the *Chicago Record*.

The major issue of the day was emigration from Italy to the United States which passed through the port of Naples. In 1905, Byington reported that in the preceding 12 months the consular staff had examined 178,396 individuals who asked to embark in Naples. Admitted were 172,413.<sup>45</sup> The consul had a running disagreement with the Italian authorities who insisted that a member of the consulate’s staff inspect the emigrants prior to their departure.<sup>46</sup> Byington feared for his grandson’s safety when the latter returned home from the consulate late at night but the documentation suggests that the inspection system was intruded upon by local organized crime, although it remains difficult to establish the extent of the consulate’s complicity. Byington did, however, manage to repair his personal finances through fees paid by the emigrants which he also used to operate the consulate.<sup>47</sup>

The threat of disease added another element to emigrant inspection as Byington noted in 1898 that “these emigration inspections are promotive neither of the health nor of pleasure. While many emigrants are cleanly in their personal attire, the major portion are not and our

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<sup>43</sup> A.H. Byington to Orville H. Platt, February 10, 1903, Byington Family Papers, Box 1 Folder 23.

<sup>44</sup> A.H. Byington to Edward C. Frisbee, April 28, 1900, Byington Family Papers, Box 1 Folder 9, Another letter to Frisbee of the same archival origin, mentions a short sojourn to Cava, 20 miles north of Naples in the Apennines where Byington and his wife recuperated in the mountain air. A brief article on May 27, 1904, in the Connecticut newspaper *The Norwalk Hour* confirms that young Homer was in charge of the consulate while his grandfather visited family in the United States.

<sup>45</sup> J.E. Miller, “Dilettanti e professionisti: talento e fortuna nella diplomazia americana a Napoli”, p. 61.

<sup>46</sup> See: FRUS papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, with the annual message of the president transmitted to Congress December 5, 1898, p. 411-418.

<sup>47</sup> H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 220.

workers are always liable to vermin and infection.”<sup>48</sup> The consulate featured a special section of the United States Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service to prevent the spread of disease. In late September 1905, the consul reported on the measures taken at the consulate to prevent the spread of Asiatic cholera in Europe.<sup>49</sup> Naples had previously suffered from a cholera outbreak in 1884.

Two letters to Byington from friends demonstrate a casual anti-Catholic bias typical of the turn of the century establishment protestant community in the United States. On August 18, 1897, James G. Batterson, President of the Travelers Insurance Company of Hartford wrote: “Glad you are going to see Mme Vesuvius” but “I advise you to keep away from Pompeii: it is not a proper place for nice young men of puritanical habits and education.”<sup>50</sup> On December 23, 1906, childhood friend E.C. Benedict sarcastically inquired as to “why there were so many well-populated orphan asylums in Catholic communities, where celibacy is so largely enjoined. I wondered if Naples was so conspicuously blessed with these institutions.”<sup>51</sup> These barbs were tied to the stereotype of Italian immigrants in the United States in this period as violent, anarchic, and overly susceptible to the pleasures of the world.

Despite differences of opinion regarding the administration of emigration in Naples, Byington and the Italian government were united in concern over the activities of Italian anarchists. In 1900, the consulate caught wind of a plot to assassinate President William McKinley by a Neapolitan secret society. Byington immediately cabled Washington and the plotters were arrested upon arrival at New York and subsequently repatriated. Around this time Byington took young Homer along to meet King Umberto I on the latter’s visit to Naples: “The young Italian speaking American fascinated King Umberto, and they had a long talk.”<sup>52</sup> On July 29, 1900, the king was assassinated by the Tuscan anarchist Gaetano Bresci. Just over

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<sup>48</sup> S. Fichera, *Italy on the Pacific: San Francisco’s Italian Americans*, New York, Springer, 2001, p. 48.

<sup>49</sup> “Asiatic Cholera in Europe” in *Public Health Reports (1896-1970)* Vol 20, No. 45. (Nov. 10, 1905), p. 2448.

<sup>50</sup> James G. Batterson to A.H. Byington, August 18, 1897, Byington Family Papers, Box 1 Folder 45.

<sup>51</sup> E.C. Benedict to A.H. Byington, December 23, 1906, Byington Family Papers, Box 1 Folder 1.

<sup>52</sup> H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 220.

a year later, on September 6, 1901, after giving a speech in Buffalo, President McKinley suffered the same fate at the hands of the Polish-American anarchist Leon Czolgosz.

Consuls were generally welcomed as honorary members of the local community. Both Byington and young Homer were freemasons and their outstanding social position indicates that they participated in a Neapolitan lodge.<sup>53</sup> During his long stay at the consulate, young Homer established close relations with the Neapolitan aristocracy, in part through his membership at the sailing club (Club Nautico della Vela Napoli). His future colleague Coert Dubois recalled that young Homer had played and sailed and rowed on crews with most of the leading businessmen in Naples when they were teen-agers together.<sup>54</sup> Indeed his athletic feats soon became legendary, between 1901 and 1903 his team “won everything that could be won and highlighted the period of rowing at the Nautico that began and finished with them.”<sup>55</sup> He also enjoyed great success at the Tennis Club Napoli situated in the park of Villa Comunale which boasted among its founding members (1905) the notable landowners Baron Alfonso Barracco, the Deputy Giuseppe Pavoncelli, Nicola Caracciolo, the Prince of Forino; Luigi Pignatelli di Monteroduni and Prince Vincenzo Pignatelli di Strongoli.<sup>56</sup> Byington won the club’s international tournament in men’s doubles in 1908 and 1920 and represented the United States in tennis at the Athens Olympic Games of 1906.

Upon his arrival in Naples in 1897 young Homer began the longest career (47 years) in the history of what later became the combined Foreign Service.<sup>57</sup> Still, at the turn of the Twentieth Century a consulship was not considered a career path. Fortunately, as a result of Theodore Roosevelt’s civil service reform, in the spring of 1903 young Homer was one of a handful of

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<sup>53</sup> Upon conclusion of his 10 year tenure in Naples, young Homer joined the Jerusalem Lodge shortly after his arrival as U.S. Consul in Bristol, England. See: H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 237. An inquiry made with the *Grande Oriente d’Italia* lodge reveals that none of the Byingtons: Aaron Homer, young Homer, nor young Homer’s son (Homer M. Byington Jr.) who later served in Naples; were members of *Grande Oriente* during their time in Naples.

<sup>54</sup> Coert Du Bois papers, Box 2, Folder 30, Incomplete manuscript autobiography, p. 241.

<sup>55</sup> See: historical images at the following address: <http://www.clubnauticodellavela.it/circolo.asp?t=storia>

<sup>56</sup> Son of Giovanni Barracco, the owner of the largest *latifondo* in Italy that extended from Capo Rizzuto to the Sila Mountains in Calabria.

<sup>57</sup> He officially entered the Consular Service on February 1, 1898.

men chosen as a consul for life in the State Department, with an annual stipend of \$1000. He therefore represented the first generation of the nascent professionalization of American representation overseas. As was the case with many consular officials for the first three decades of the Twentieth Century he did not have a college education.

Aaron Homer Byington resigned from Naples in the summer of 1907 because “in addition to his wife’s poor health, there had been too much work to do when Homer had gone away.”<sup>58</sup> In 1908, young Homer’s first child was born in Naples: he too named Homer (Homer M. Byington Jr. 1908-1987) who eventually continued the family tradition at the consulate. Later that year, young Homer was appointed as U.S. Consul in Bristol, England. Through most of World War I he remained in Britain as U.S. Consul in Leeds (1913-1917) after which he was assigned to assist the U.S. Representative from Tennessee and future Secretary of State, Cordell Hull.

In 1920, young Homer (from here on “Byington”) was named U.S. Consul in Naples. Thus, at age 40 he returned to the city where he already had 10 years of work experience. The consulate then consisted of the entire Villa Coccozza located at Via Cuma 7 on the corner of Via Nazario Sauro in the Santa Lucia basin. His subordinate Coert Du Bois affectionately recalled of Byington: “He knew how their minds worked and an American that can follow the intricacies of a Neapolitan mind is a rarity and without price as a consular officer in Southern Italy.”<sup>59</sup> Du Bois’ first impression of Byington was that of a “stout, jolly-looking person, smoking one of the vilest smelling cigars I ever met [...] strict but the squarest kind of square shooter, patient with our mistakes if they were honest but ruthless if they weren’t, kindly and humorous, a swell sport and a noble eater and drinker.”<sup>60</sup> The Byingtons were a middle class family yet through the favorable exchange rate and a social network that included the influential Naples aristocracy, they rented the Villa Cottrau in Posillipo which featured a garden, a terrace 150 feet above the sea, and a private dock. Byington clearly adapted to local

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<sup>58</sup> A.H. Byington to Edward C. Frisbee, July 6, 1907, Byington Family Papers, Box 1 Folder 31.

<sup>59</sup> Coert Du Bois papers, Box 2, Folder 30, Incomplete manuscript autobiography, p. 227.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

customs as his bodyguard was the *camorrista* Lorenzo “The Animal”.<sup>61</sup> In 1923, the consulate was elevated to a consulate general. In a considerable vote of confidence from the State Department, Byington was named supervisory consul general of the other American consulates in Italy in 1924.<sup>62</sup>

In the early 1920s, Byington and Du Bois were firsthand witnesses to the tremendous postwar social unrest in Italy. Strikes were frequent and violent especially in the public sectors. Given the chaotic situation, Byington was initially favorable to Prime Minister Benito Mussolini’s government as a means of restoring public order.<sup>63</sup> He believed “in a dispassionate sort of way, that Italians (particularly Neapolitans) had very different backgrounds, customs and traditions from those of people of Anglo-Saxon descent. Consequently, they were less likely to be able to govern themselves successfully under a democratic form of government.”<sup>64</sup> In short, Byington shared the widely diffused British approach to fascism, as identified by the historian Paolo Nello: “The English, who viewed the Fascist recipe as positive for Italy, rejected it for themselves because it was completely contrary to their history of parliamentary liberties.”<sup>65</sup> Still, Byington and his son Homer Jr., who later served in Naples, did not have “the slightest use for the excesses of fascism or for the pompous ranting of the *Duce*, but if the result of fascist rule was an improvement in the overall well-being of the Italian people, they were prepared, up to a point, to overlook as necessary evils, the crueler aspects of his dictatorial rule.”<sup>66</sup> Social order made consular work easier and there would no need to evacuate American expatriates. Still, it is telling that in all

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> In addition to Naples, in 1924 the United States operated consulates in Catania, Florence, Genoa, Livorno, Messina, Milan, Palermo, Rome, Trieste, Turin, and Venice.

<sup>63</sup> See: J. Grant, *In the Background, An Oral History of Jim Byington*, Milwaukee, Privately Published, 1996, available at Lauinger Library, Georgetown University.

<sup>64</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 251.

<sup>65</sup> P. Nello, *Dino Grandi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2003, p.146. “E, tuttavia, gli stessi inglesi, che giudicavano buona la ricetta fascista per l’Italia, la rigettavano per se medesimi, perché di segno diametralmente opposto alla loro storia di libertà parlamentari.”

<sup>66</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 251.

the documentation consulted regarding the Byington family, no mention is made of the 1924 abduction and assassination of the Socialist Deputy Giacomo Matteotti.

Byington's reporting from Naples on the August 1927 executions of the Italian-born anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti in Massachusetts was characteristic of the dominant New England protestant establishment. The executions caused outrage in the working class population in Italy yet Byington noted with satisfaction in a letter to Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg that the "Italian authorities had supplied an almost perfect protection."<sup>67</sup> Certainly his memory of the assassinations of King Umberto I and President McKinley, along with his grandfather's role in preventing the assassination of McKinley in 1900 colored his opinion toward anarchists.

Due to his long experience in Naples dating back to 1897, Byington had become one of the foremost experts on immigration in the State Department under his mentor and protector, Assistant Secretary of State Wilbur Carr. In 1921, the U.S. Congress enacted a quota system which greatly restricted the number of Italians immigrants and soon became a major sticking point in bilateral relations. Byington granted interviews on the subject while on home leave in 1923

Italy is growing fast, [...] and has a population of forty millions today. Naples contains one million, and the congestion there is such that shipping and business in general are harmed, wages are low, and living conditions poor. More than 500,000 persons last year applied for the right to come here, but only 42,000 came. Our laws caused the trouble. Many former Italians, secure in American citizenship, have returned to Italy to marry "the girl" and then have found that "the girl" is still an Italian citizen and cannot go back to America with her husband. Others have come back with passports covering six months and then find Italy's laws are such that they cannot return for more than six months, and so are up against an expensive proposition in getting an extension of time. Italy, [...] would today send more than her pre-war total of 250,000 persons per year if America permitted. And the Italian Government hopes to see a change as soon as possible.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> See: L. McGirr "The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti: A Global History" *Journal of American History*, Issue 93, March 2007, Footnote, p. 1093.

<sup>68</sup> "Italians Eager to Enter U.S.", *The Evening News*, (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania), October 10, 1923, p. 10.

Byington served as a member of the American delegation at the International Conference on Emigration and Immigration in Rome from May 15 to May 31, 1924, along with Edward J. Henning, Assistant Secretary of Labor; Mr. Walter W. Husband, Commissioner General of Immigration; and Surgeon General Hugh S. Cumming of the United States Public Health Service.<sup>69</sup>

In the economic field, Byington “benefitted from the desire of Mussolini’s regime to attract American investments, many American businesses established offices in Naples. Kodak, Singer, American Express and Western Union were among the best known large companies working in Naples.”<sup>70</sup> He was also responsible for reporting on the agricultural products of Southern Italy and in 1927 he wrote *Glassware in Southern Italy* which was published by the U.S. government. This activity coincided with financial support for Mussolini’s increasingly dictatorial rule in late May 1925 in the form of a \$50,000,000 credit extended to the major Italian banks over a six month period by J.P. Morgan & Company. Another loan of \$100,000,000 for the purpose of stabilizing Italy was agreed to by the same bank in November. In 1928, when Byington was on home leave, Warren D. Robbins, a first cousin of Franklin D. Roosevelt, was chargé d’affaires at the consulate; Roosevelt was then running as the Democratic candidate for Governor of New York.

Another subordinate of Byington, the previously mentioned Coert Du Bois, was born in 1881 in Hudson, New York, and educated at the Biltmore Forest School in North Carolina.<sup>71</sup> Du Bois entered the Consular Service because he was intrigued by the status of consuls as being honorary members of the community where they were stationed, and the opportunity to

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<sup>69</sup> FRUS United States Department of State / Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1923, p 121.

<sup>70</sup> J.E. Miller, “Dilettanti e professionisti: talento e fortuna nella diplomazia americana a Napoli”, p. 67.

<sup>71</sup> After Congress declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917, Du Bois became an officer in the United States Army and served in France as the Chief of Engineers to the 10th Engineers Corps. Upon returning to the United States, he registered for the Consular Service entrance examination because he wanted to see more of the world. Returning to his forestry job in California would have been “too awful dull”. Coert Du Bois papers, Box 2, Folder 30, Incomplete manuscript autobiography, p. 224.

help American interests and travelers.<sup>72</sup> In 1920, he worked in the Naples visa section and soon developed a solid working relationship and close friendship with Byington. Prior to the quota system created by Congress in 1921, the consulate granted about 700 visas daily.<sup>73</sup> Du Bois later recalled of this time in Naples: “There was open fighting with the rapidly growing Fascist party and returning soldiers were breaking up tractors and other machinery on the farms. All these factors made Italy a wonderfully fine country to get out of for the peasant and worker class.”<sup>74</sup> Due to the frequent interruption of the tramway service transportation from the Villa Maisto in Marechiaro to the consulate became difficult. Therefore, Du Bois bought a small boat which he used in good weather to sail to the consulate in Santa Lucia.

Du Bois took on the Vitiello family as servants in Naples. This was a common practice among foreign officials who worked in the city which he described as a “highly satisfactory relationship that is essentially feudal and characteristically Italian. There is nothing patronizing about it and each party has the full respect of the other.”<sup>75</sup> It is highly likely that the Vitiello’s passed to Du Bois through Consul Byington who, as previously noted, had a *camorrista* as a bodyguard. Du Bois recalled: “Anything I needed along the whole Neapolitan waterfront was available through the Vitiellos and their connections. Nothing of ours was ever stolen and if I indicated that someone along the waterfront was making a bit of a nuisance of himself, something was liable to happen to that someone.”<sup>76</sup> Clearly, it was not only the elite diplomatic embassy secretaries that quickly adapted to foreign social customs.

Du Bois’ first tour of duty in Naples lasted two years. Then, after two years at the U.S. Consulate in Port Said, he returned to Washington in 1925 as Chief of the State Department’s Visa Division. This high level of responsibility placed on a single Foreign Service officer is

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<sup>72</sup> Coert Du Bois papers, Box 2, Folder 30, Incomplete manuscript autobiography, p. 227. Du Bois’ first posting in 1919 was the U.S. Consulate General in Paris. He considered the work boring and did not have the finances to satisfy the demands of American tourists who insisted on being shown around town.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Coert Du Bois papers, Box 2, Folder 30, Incomplete manuscript autobiography, p. 242.

<sup>75</sup> Coert Du Bois papers, Box 2, Folder 30, Incomplete manuscript autobiography, p. 245.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

characteristic of the modest dimension of the pre-World War II State Department. In the meantime, Congress had passed the Johnson-Reed Act in 1924 which limited immigration to the United States from all countries to a total of 2% of the number of people who were already resided in the United States from each country. The law was designed to favor immigration from Great Britain, Germany, and Scandinavia at the expense of Southern and Eastern Europe. In 1925, the authorities at Ellis Island habitually ignored consular visas given overseas and rejected many immigrants from Italy due to failed medical inspections.

Du Bois worked alongside Assistant Secretary of State Wilbur Carr and Secretary of Labor James Wilson in order to resolve the visa problems. After much deliberation, they decided to decentralize the immigration process by dividing it into small pieces, thus concentrating visa granting offices to a limited number of consulates in each foreign country. In addition, Immigration Service inspectors and Public Health Service surgeons would act as on-site technical advisers to the visa-granting consulates. Permission had to be sought from foreign governments to conduct this operation on their soil, and a commission was sent overseas to coordinate the activity. The system was put into place in the autumn of 1926 on the British Isles and extended to France, Holland, Belgium, and Germany the following winter. The State Department had briefed the Italian Embassy in Washington about the intensive examination of emigrants abroad but the Italian government initially refused to request the installation of the system in its territory. According to Du Bois

Mussolini believed it was an insult to the Fascist State to insinuate that Italian medical officers were not fully qualified to pass on all medical questions connected with the emigration of Italians and that furthermore the stationing of Public Health officers would be an infringement of Italian sovereignty. [...] Meanwhile, as might have been expected, Italy was having continual trouble with her emigrants in New York. Many were being excluded as having trachoma, tuberculosis of the bone, mental weaknesses or other defects, moral or physical.<sup>77</sup>

Italian steamship lines were fined by the U.S. government for bringing immigrants to Ellis Island who subsequently failed the medical inspection and bore the cost of repatriating them. As a result they lobbied the Italian government to accept the new immigration system. In the

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<sup>77</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Box 2, Folder 32, p. 315.

end, Mussolini acceded to the new inspection regime and Du Bois returned briefly to Naples in July 1927 to coordinate the new emigration system with Consul General Byington. They decided that the “comparatively small quota of 5000 odd could be handled at three intensive examination stations - - Genoa, Naples, and Palermo.”<sup>78</sup> Their plan was accepted by the Italian Foreign Office in Rome. The two men then traveled to Genoa and Palermo to implement the new procedures. “In early August the scheme went into effect in all Italy and rejections of Italian emigrants in Ellis Island dropped to nothing.”<sup>79</sup>

During his time as Visa Chief in Washington, Du Bois groomed two successors in case an opportunity arose for him to return to the field. They were George Brandt: future U.S. Consul General in Naples from 1944-1949 and Monnett Davis: future Chief of Personnel of the Foreign Service. Du Bois later recalled: “Much as I disliked the Department assignment, it cannot be denied that it helps a Foreign Service career if the officer makes good - and cooks it if he doesn’t. You are working in a show-window.”<sup>80</sup>

## **1.2 Homer M. Byington I: Foreign Service Chief of Personnel 1929-1933**

In 1929, at the outset of the Hoover administration, the Republican Byington was recalled to Washington D.C. after more than eight years in Naples. He accepted his new position as the first Chief of the new Division of Foreign Service Personnel on March 22 even though it constituted a personal economic sacrifice; he had six children and enjoyed a high quality of life in Naples with domestic servants due to the favorable exchange rate between the dollar and lira. The determining factor in this decision was his belief in the ideal of civil service as outlined by Theodore Roosevelt in the latter’s “Citizenship in a Republic” speech of 1910.

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<sup>78</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Box 2, Folder 32, p. 317.

<sup>79</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Box 2, Folder 32, p. 318. Upon the conclusion of this work, Du Bois sailed through the Eastern Mediterranean in August 1927 with his family for a new assignment in the Netherlands East Indies. Stopping in Italian administered Rhodes, he was quite impressed by the restoration of the Street of the Crusaders carried out by the Mussolini regime.

<sup>80</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Box 2, Folder 32, p. 314.

As chief of personnel Byington tightened up the Foreign Service's entrance examination to prevent bias in favor of wealthy candidates.<sup>81</sup> Elbridge Durbrow, who took the exams in the winter of 1930, recalled: "it was now possible to enter without being rich."<sup>82</sup> Still, it is important to note the subjective nature of the entrance exam given that great importance was placed upon the oral, rather than the written portion. The social network of a candidate's family remained an influential factor, as in the case of Edward Page Jr., a Harvard graduate who was identified in late 1929 as a promising candidate by Assistant Secretary of State William Castle of the examination board: "His father is an intimate friend of Charlie Adams so I imagine they are the right sort of people."<sup>83</sup> For other candidates a Foreign Service career remained a more a difficult proposition due to racial, ethnic, and religious biases of the examination board members. Women and blacks were largely excluded from consideration. Indicative of the screening procedure was the case of the oral examination of Earl T. Crain, a non-career vice-consul stationed in Havana. Castle wrote in his diary: "We all liked him very much, but Byington thinks, from his appearance, that he has a touch of the tar brush. I had a long talk with him afterward about his ancestors and his family in general and do not think there is anything in it."<sup>84</sup> Crain was accepted and enjoyed a long career in the service.

Many young Foreign Service officers of means disapproved of having to perform the more mundane consular work as mandated by Rogers Act of 1924 which amalgamated the Consular and Diplomatic services and rendered consuls and diplomats interchangeable. To boost morale Byington took a "hands on" approach to management and often met with returning FSO's when they returned to Washington.<sup>85</sup> He also instituted the policy that new recruits would

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<sup>81</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 259.

<sup>82</sup> See: Elbridge Durbrow interview with John T. Mason Jr., May 5, 1981, Columbia University. By "rich" Durbrow meant the status of a major industrial or financial heir.

<sup>83</sup> William Castle Diary, Box 15, October 6, 1929. When Castle was nominated U.S. Ambassador to Japan in 1930, he decided to take Page along as his personal secretary as the latter had proven to be "thoroughly a diplomatic type" and "intelligent, rather scared, a gentleman and, I am sure, of excellent character - without being a prohibitionist or having any silly ideas." William Castle Diary, Box 15, December 11, 1929. Page had also studied at the University of Grenoble and the National School of Modern Eastern Languages (Ecole Nationale des Langues Orientales Vivantes).

<sup>84</sup> William Castle Diary, Box 15, October 14, 1930.

<sup>85</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 259.

undergo an initial training in the field before returning to the newly created Foreign Service School.<sup>86</sup> With the passing of time, the service registered a general improvement in quality across the board under the provisions of the Rogers Act which led to the “extinction and disappearance of incompetent diplomats due to the stricter entrance exam.”<sup>87</sup> An article in *Fortune* magazine notes that the 289 officers that entered the career from 1930 to 1941 without previous service abroad were the “ablest yet attracted to the service” citing the keen competition in the years of the Great Depression when “the pay and allowances of a third secretary were much higher than the going rates for young college graduates in private industry.”<sup>88</sup> As recounted by Douglas MacArthur II who took the entrance exam in September 1932 “when I entered the service, around 1000 people took the exam. Of the thousand, there were 105 of us who passed the written exam. After the oral exam 35 of us were selected.”<sup>89</sup> In conclusion, Byington was largely responsible for establishing the criteria which yielded a more effective generation of Foreign Service officers. Still, his career path with its origin in the Consular Service, his modest means, and a lack of a documentation tied to his career have ensured that he remains much less well known than his wealthier colleagues who began their career as embassy secretaries such as William Phillips and Joseph Grew.

Long before the rapid post World War II growth of Washington D.C., the Foreign Service and international diplomatic society constituted a major part of the capital’s social fabric. As Chief of Personnel, Byington was invited to a White House reception on December 10, 1931.<sup>90</sup> Still, he was not eager to participate in social Washington and was rarely seen in the society papers with a few exceptions such as a dinner with the U.S. Army officer George S. Patton Jr.<sup>91</sup> From 1934 to 1935, Byington served as President of the Foreign Service

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<sup>86</sup> G. Stuart, *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*, p 61.

<sup>87</sup> “The U.S. Foreign Service”, *Fortune*, July 1946, p. 198.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> ADST interview Douglas MacArthur II with Charles Stuart Kennedy, December 15, 1986. MacArthur II was the nephew of General Douglas MacArthur.

<sup>90</sup> Invitation in Byington Family Papers Box 2 Folder 41.

<sup>91</sup> “Dinner Given by Hammonds at their Home”, *Washington Post*, December 18, 1930, p. 9.

Association which sought to further improve the efficiency of the service and to promote public awareness of diplomacy. By 1936, he was the longest tenured Foreign Service officer having started his career on January 1, 1898.<sup>92</sup> Despite Byington's successes, the continued difficulties tied to the 1924 amalgamation of the consular and diplomatic services continued well into the Roosevelt administration and the notable social distinction between consular and diplomatic work. remained in place. In fact, Under Secretary of State William Phillips (1933-1936), noted in his diary on October 22, 1935: "Bill Castle came in this morning for a few moments [...] He was, however, very emphatic in his disapproval of the President's policy of assigning high diplomatic officers to consular posts. I agree with him entirely, but naturally could not say so."<sup>93</sup>

### **1.3 FDR and the Foreign Service, 1933-1937**

With the United States mired in the Great Depression, Franklin Delano Roosevelt promised a "New Deal" in the administration of the American economy and enjoyed a landslide victory in the presidential election of November 1932. The Roosevelt family dated back to colonial times in New York and the president shared a privileged social background with his generation's professional diplomats. In fact, Roosevelt, born in 1882, passed nearly half of his childhood in Great Britain and continental Europe.<sup>94</sup> Therefore, it is not surprising that he did not immediately adapt to the social customs of his peers at the prestigious Groton School in Massachusetts upon his return to the United States in 1896. The historian John Harper notes that "this adolescent transition left him permanently hostile to Europeanized Americans and self-conscious about the appearance of European effeteness in himself."<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> *Alton Evening Telegraph*, November 17, 1936, Alton, Illinois, p. 4.

<sup>93</sup> William Phillips Diary, Box 5, Folder 1, October 22, 1935.

<sup>94</sup> H.W. Brands, *Traitor to His Class: The Privileged Life and Radical Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt*, New York, Doubleday, 2008, p. 21.

<sup>95</sup> J.L. Harper, *American Visions of Europe: Franklin D. Roosevelt, George F. Kennan, and Dean G. Acheson*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p 20. As president, Roosevelt referred to the diplomats as "white spat boys". He did, however, nominate his first cousin, the professional diplomat Warren Delano Robbins as U.S. Minister to Canada in 1933.

Roosevelt was convinced of his own ability to manage foreign policy effectively and often worked without the knowledge or counsel of his Secretary of State, Cordell Hull.<sup>96</sup> In the president's eyes the State Department constituted a bureaucratic obstacle to the efficient execution of policy while the Foreign Service was considered an appendage of the Republican Party which had dominated American politics in the Roaring Twenties. The endorsement of a laissez faire economic philosophy by wealthy Republicans led Roosevelt to characterize his opposition as "economic royalists."<sup>97</sup> Starting in 1933, he appointed trusted New Dealers to positions in the State Department to ensure support for his foreign policy. The historian Kenneth Weisbrode notes that "Roosevelt was not the first president to serve as his own foreign minister, but he took the practice to new lengths in sowing so much confusion, redundancy, rivalry, and antipathy in the bureaucratic ranks that the young Foreign Service was nearly nipped in the bud."<sup>98</sup> Noteworthy is the case of Columbia University law professor Raymond Moley, without foreign policy experience, who became Assistant Secretary of State. The rank and file of the State Department, including Foreign Service officers, considered maneuvers of this nature an insult to their qualifications as the custodians of the national interest. Indeed, while preparing for the London Economic Conference of 1933, Moley claimed to be unable to locate in the State Department "a single person who understood and sympathized with F.D.R.'s domestic and foreign objectives' enough to be trusted with the preliminary work."<sup>99</sup> To many establishment Republicans, the president's agenda of economic reform was considered traitorous to his own social class and the creation of the New Deal agencies was a major overreach of executive power.

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<sup>96</sup> Hull's approach to resolve the international economic crisis and economic nationalism was the promotion of multilateral trade agreements designed to reduce tariffs. Roosevelt was not convinced that long-standing hatreds in Europe could be resolved through economic measures.

<sup>97</sup> Therefore, while there was a notable improvement in work carried out by the Foreign Service in the 1930s, the organization was permeated by an ethos that sought to preserve the existing social order against the current of looming economic and demographic changes.

<sup>98</sup> K. Weisbrode, *The Atlantic Century: Four Generations of Extraordinary Diplomats who Forged America's Vital Alliance with Europe*, Boston, Da Capo Press, 2009, p. 31.

<sup>99</sup> A.M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Coming of the New Deal: 1933-1935, the Age of Roosevelt*, Boston, Mariner Books, 2003, p. 204.

By the 1930s, new recruits to the Foreign Service were drawn from all regions of the country. Contemporaneously, the cultural and social predominance of the so-called East Coast establishment continued to exert a strong pressure toward conformity with its sophisticated lifestyle and European-centered world vision. Differently than in Europe, however, the diplomatic career was a novelty in the United States and did not bestow prestige in public opinion. On the contrary, the popular press lampooned diplomats as out of touch with the American people: common epithets were “striped-pants boys”, “cookie pushers” and in war-time, “draft dodgers”. Isolationist sentiment further increased suspicion of diplomatic negotiations as an unwarranted compromise of the national interest. Furthermore, in the years of the Great Depression, American people opinion opposed the allocation of scarce public funds to a diplomatic corps that was often perceived as an elitist institution staffed by false aristocrats. Still, while the federal government expanded with the creation of the New Deal agencies during FDR’s first term, many diplomatic posts Foreign Service remained understaffed due to the 1932-1935 hiring freeze.<sup>100</sup> The economic condition of American consuls working overseas, particularly in countries that used the British pound, was rendered difficult by the devaluation of the dollar in April 1933. Congress was reluctant to augment compensation with the nation facing the gravest economic crisis in its history.

Shortly after taking office, Roosevelt recognized officially recognized the government of the Soviet Union. Although the United States was the last major power to take this step, diplomatic recognition infuriated the conservative anticommunists in the State Department who abhorred communism as a threat to social order, personal liberty, and the capitalist economic system.<sup>101</sup> Differently, the president sought to valorize the reformist openings of socialism while hoping that dialogue could reduce its extreme political repression. Constructive relations with the Soviets were also necessary to contrast Japanese imperialist expansion in Asia. As his ambassador to Moscow, Roosevelt appointed the lawyer William C. Bullitt who had diplomatic experience dating back to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and

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<sup>100</sup> Stuart notes that in the 1936 presentation before Congress for the State Department budget, there were only 645 foreign service officers to cover the 318 embassy and consulates. Stuart, *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*, p. 105.

<sup>101</sup> The United Kingdom had recognized the Soviet Union nine years earlier on February 1, 1924.

had long campaigned for recognition of the Soviet Union. Bullitt became part of a group of emissaries known as Roosevelt's "eyes and ears in Europe."<sup>102</sup> After Roosevelt's reelection in November 1936, Bullitt was moved to Paris. His replacement in Moscow was another friend of Roosevelt: the corporate lawyer Joseph E. Davies who was determined to strengthen American ties with the Soviet Union despite Stalin's show trials and cast a favorable light on the Soviet system in his dispatches to Roosevelt. The career diplomats generally believed that political nominees did not have a sufficient understanding of foreign affairs and governments to be an effective ambassador. Still, in the case of Roosevelt's envoys, the dissent was largely ideological; the diplomats were well aware that ambassadorships were often political rewards. Opposition to Davies initiatives came from the State Department's Office of Eastern European Affairs which was composed of Foreign Service officers and known for its intellectual discipline and hostility to communism. The president, seeking to eliminate opposition to his Soviet policy, applied strong pressure on Secretary of State Hull and the Office of Eastern European Affairs was liquidated in 1939.

The Foreign Service officers on duty in the State Department's Bureau of European Affairs (EUR) in Washington were not without means of protecting their position and influence. First, the Personnel Board of the Foreign Service which administered the entrance exam was staffed by career diplomats who filtered the candidates partly on the basis of political sympathies, social class, ethnicity, and religion.<sup>103</sup> Reflecting the primacy of relations with European nations, EUR was the State Department's principal clearing house of information arriving from the most important consular and diplomatic establishments overseas. The diplomats circumnavigated Roosevelt's men in the State Department by drafting documents which they brought directly the Secretary of State Hull for his signature as "no Secretary of State, even if he was a superman, would be physically capable of reading even a small percentage of the

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<sup>102</sup> D. Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War: Churchill, Roosevelt, and the International History of the 1940s*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 168. Myron Taylor (Vatican 1939-1952) and Averell Harriman (roving grey eminence and then Ambassador to Soviet Union (1943-1946) were other personal envoys of Roosevelt in Europe.

<sup>103</sup> Weil, *A Pretty Good Club*, p. 47.

telegrams that arrived from the Department every day.”<sup>104</sup> It must be remembered that Secretary Hull and Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles (1937-1943) were bitter enemies. As a result of this bureaucratic infighting, there existed two, not completely separate channels of information in the apparatus of American foreign policy: Roosevelt’s nominees reported to Welles, while the career diplomats communicated directly with their colleague Foreign Service officer James Dunn who had become Hull’s most trusted assistant.<sup>105</sup> At the same time, Roosevelt depended upon Hull’s political strength in his relations with Congress.

Under Roosevelt the State Department in the 1930s dealt with the day-to-day problems that cropped up overseas but played an insignificant role in planning foreign policy. Morale in the department sunk as the system of international relations showed major strain beginning in the autumn of 1935. As noted by the historian Hugh De Santis

Shocked by the destabilizing and destructive tendencies of foreign states, the American government and public attempted to barricade themselves behind the facade of neutrality legislation. As a consequence, the professional diplomat, so-called expert, was reduced to the status of his nineteenth-century predecessor, for the most part a “clerk at the end of a wire.”<sup>106</sup>

This state of affairs is confirmed by Dean Acheson, Secretary of State from 1949 to 1953: “The prewar State Department was closer to its nineteenth-century predecessors in both what it did and how the work was done than to the department I was later to command.”<sup>107</sup> With few exceptions, American diplomats remained in the background as secondary elements in the great geopolitical events centered on the European continent even though the United States had been the world center of financial activity since the end of the First World War. Still, with the Reorganization Act of 1939, the Foreign Service inherited the responsibility of drafting

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<sup>104</sup> G. Stuart, *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*, p. 27.

<sup>105</sup> This state of affairs in the pre-World War II State Department is confirmed by Dean Acheson in his memoirs: “The Department became divided into Welles’ men who looked to the Under Secretary [...] and Hull men who sought guidance from the chief.” D. Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years at the State Department*, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 1969, p. 12.

<sup>106</sup> H. De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence, The American Foreign Service, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War, (1933-1947)*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1980, pp. 21-22.

<sup>107</sup> D. Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years at the State Department*, p. 12.

independent reports which had previously belonged to the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture.

### **Foreign Marriages**

Matrimony between American diplomats and foreign nationals was another thorny issue which caused friction between Roosevelt and the Foreign Service officers. As the system of international relations began to demonstrate increased instability from 1933 onward, marriages between diplomats and foreign nationals were considered a security risk to the diplomat's government due to his spouse's vicinity to sensitive information. Consequently, presidents and prime ministers sought to ensure that the loyalty of their representatives abroad was not compromised. According to the Foreign Service officer Robert Woodward, the campaign to ban foreign marriages was championed by William Bullitt, Roosevelt's ambassador to the Soviet Union, who complained to the president that none of the wives at his mission were American, and that they did not represent the United States.<sup>108</sup> Another concern was that a foreign wife of an American chief of mission might be displeasing to the American colony of the foreign capital as well as American travelers. A 1936 study prepared by the State Department noted that 18% of Foreign Service officers had foreign wives which meant that some of them would be ineligible for service in certain countries.<sup>109</sup> For example, an officer with a French wife would not be available for work in Germany and vice-versa.

Shortly after his first reelection, Roosevelt signed Executive Order #7497 of November 17, 1936, which forced Foreign Service officers to submit their resignation along with their request to marry a foreigner. Although the new law did not exclude the possibility of foreign wives to become American citizens, the naturalization period of five years' residence effectively precluded this path. The order also blocked entrance into the Foreign Service for those already married to a foreign citizen. The above mentioned Robert Woodward, future

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<sup>108</sup> ADST interview Robert F. Woodward with Charles Stuart Kennedy, May 5, 1987.

<sup>109</sup> See E.C. Stowell, "The Ban of Alien Marriages in the Foreign Service", *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol 31, no.1 (January 1937) p. 91.

Chief of Personnel of the Foreign Service, recalled that he would have married an Argentine if not for his strong desire to advance in the ranks.<sup>110</sup> In theory, the ban on foreign marriages signified that prospective diplomats would be forced to marry by the time of college graduation, as shortly thereafter they would take the Foreign Service entrance examination and spend the majority of the next 30 to 40 years overseas. In practice, “convertibility” was a major question as noted by Dean Acheson who, as Assistant Secretary of State from 1941 to 1945, was tasked with ruling on marriages between American Foreign Service officers and foreign nationals along with G. Howland Shaw and Adolf Berle. Acheson noted “Our approaches to the problem were diverse. Shaw leaned toward the litmus test of home leave and a change of post. Berle saw the dangers to security. I was inclined to favor Anglo-Saxons and Latin Americans as readily convertible, disfavor Europeans - except Italians - and to be inquisitive about the how, when, and why of the romance.”<sup>111</sup>

A truly Transatlantic society was born as the United States matured into the predominant economic world power in the first decades of the Twentieth Century. A crucial element tied to the question of foreign interdependence consisted in the marriages between wealthy Americans women and titled European landowners. These pacts were tacit political and economic alliances between old world prestige, land, and titles, and American industrial fortunes. Consequently, a posting to Washington D.C. or New York became highly desirable to young European diplomats for it provided entrance into the East Coast Establishment milieu. In particular, the Gold Coast society of New York was noteworthy for the presence of conspicuous heiresses.<sup>112</sup> An example of this trend was the marriage of Giuseppe Brambilla, Counselor of the Italian Embassy in Washington during the First World War, to Julia Appleton Meyer of Massachusetts in October 1917. Meyer’s father, the businessman George Meyer had served as U.S. Ambassador in Rome from 1901 to 1905 where the couple first met.

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> D. Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years at the State Department*, p. 14.

<sup>112</sup> It must be remembered that if diplomats did not marry at a young age in their native country, there would be few female compatriots overseas.

Another conduit for Transatlantic marriages was the fashionable summer social season travel of wealthy unmarried American women to Europe.<sup>113</sup> Such was the case of Mary Gayley of Philadelphia, the daughter of James Gayley (Vice-President of U.S. Steel and one of Andrew Carnegie's closest friends), who met the Roman diplomat Count Giulio Senni while traveling in Italy.<sup>114</sup> They were married in Manhattan in 1908 and in the 1930s constituted a central node of the social milieu inhabited by American diplomats and their Italian Foreign Office counterparts in Rome. These mixed marriages constituted the ever-present backdrop of the diplomatic world and bestowed soft power on the United States in the field of social representation where high government officials mingled with the aristocratic society.

During his service as First Secretary at the Italian embassy in Washington from 1925 to 1930 the Calabrian Count Leonardo Vitetti met the Standard Oil heiress Natalie Mai Coe; they were married on May 19, 1934, in Oyster Bay, Long Island.<sup>115</sup> Mussolini was originally opposed to the marriage but Countess Vitetti soon entered the dictator's good graces by learning Italian and befriending his daughter Edda Ciano.<sup>116</sup> Above all Mussolini realized that Countess Vitetti could be useful for propaganda purposes. In fact, Edda had planned a trip to

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<sup>113</sup> The young Clare Boothe (later named Clare Boothe Luce, the U.S. Ambassador to Italy 1953-1956) participated in this Transatlantic society with her mother in search of a wealthy husband.

<sup>114</sup> Vetting Italian suitors of wealthy American women to ensure that the former's claims of property and title were legitimate was part of Homer M. Byington's work as American consul in Naples from 1898-1907. See: H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, pp. 222-223. Another foreign marriage between Neapolitan aristocracy and wealthy Americans was the 1926 marriage of Don Giovanni Battista Carignani of Naples and the New York based Mary Demann Clark. They lived in an 18 room apartment in Villa Maria in Naples.

<sup>115</sup> "A Son to Mrs. Vitetti" *New York Times*, October 29, 1935. Coe was the daughter of William Robertson Coe, an English insurance broker and philanthropist who had moved his family to New Jersey in 1913. Coe's maternal grandfather was the industrialist Henry Huttleston Rogers (1840-1909) a financier who worked for Standard Oil and in later years became a renowned philanthropist. Natalie's first cousin, Millicent Rogers, also a Standard Oil heiress was a socialite and fashion designer, had been romantically involved with (and had received marriage proposals from) the Duke of Aosta as well as Galeazzo Ciano. See: C. Burns, *Searching for Beauty: The Life of Millicent Rogers, the American Heiress Who Taught the World About Style*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 2011, p.160 and p. 47.

<sup>116</sup> For most of the 1930s Italian diplomats asked for special permission from Mussolini to proceed with the marriage of a foreign national. In 1939, the Italian government forbid the functionaries of Palazzo Chigi from marrying foreign nationals. From 1932 to 1936, Vitetti served as Embassy Counselor in London under the Ambassador Dino Grandi. In an attempt to irritate British authorities, Grandi was the first member of the London diplomatic corps to extend a dinner invitation to Wallis Simpson and Edward, the Prince of Wales. Simpson was a twice-married American socialite who had developed a scandalous secret romance with the heir to the British throne.

the United States in early 1937 on which Countess Vitetti would have served as her guide. The trip was cancelled by order of the *Duce*, ostensibly because he feared communist agitators in the United States, but more likely due to his anger at Roosevelt's criticism of dictatorships in a December 1, 1936, speech in Buenos Aires.<sup>117</sup>

Another example of the trend of Italian diplomats marrying high society Americans was the August 8, 1931, wedding of the Italian vice-consul in New York, Count Guerino "Ghino" Roberti to Mary Stevens Hammond. Roberti was the son of Count Piero Roberti, a prominent attorney in the Roman nobility, and the union received the blessing of the Pope which was delivered through Cardinal Pacelli. On the other hand, the Hammond family, present in North America since 1699 was part of the New Jersey protestant establishment and featured in the history of the American Civil War.<sup>118</sup> Mary's father, Ogden H. Hammond was active in the New Jersey Republican Party and had been the U.S. Ambassador to Spain from 1925 to 1929. Roberti was Secretary of the Italian Embassy in Washington in the years 1935-1939, where he became a friend of the above-mentioned James Dunn, Secretary of State Hull's trusted assistant.

A similar marriage occurred on February 20, 1939, between the New Yorker Margaret Randolph Trimble and the Italian diplomat Count Giovanni Revedin, eldest son of the Marchese of San Martino Revedin.<sup>119</sup> Trimble's family history in the United States dated back to Plymouth Colony in the early Seventeenth Century. Her father, Richard Trimble, had been the Secretary and Treasurer of the U.S. Steel Corporation for 21 years as well as an associate of J.P. Morgan.<sup>120</sup> J.P. Morgan associate Thomas Lamont was responsible for the \$100 million

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<sup>117</sup> William Phillips Diary, Box 7, Folder 3, January 9, 1937.

<sup>118</sup> A. Schapiro, *Millicent Fenwick: Her Way*, Rutgers University Press, 2003. p. 3.

<sup>119</sup> "Miss. Margaret Randolph Trimble Married in St. Patrick's to Count Giovanni Revedin", *New York Times*, February 21, 1939, p. 23. The two witnesses were Gaetano Vecchiotti, Italian Consul General in New York and Count Guerino Roberti, First Secretary of the Italian Embassy in Washington D.C.

<sup>120</sup> "Margaret Trimble Engaged to Count: Daughter of Late Secretary of U.S. Steel Will Be Wed to Giovanni Revedin", *New York Times*, March 1, 1938, p. 24.

loan to the Italian government in 1924.<sup>121</sup> Lastly, in 1923, Count Carlo Dentice di Frasso, born in Lecce in 1876, married the New York socialite Dorothy Cadwell Taylor on Park Avenue in Manhattan. Di Frasso had been a deputy in the Italian Parliament from 1909 to 1919. Countess Di Frasso bought and restored the Villa Madama on Monte Mario which she was forced to sell by order of Mussolini when Italy and the United States went to war in December 1941.

#### **1.4 Ambassador John W. Garrett, 1929-1933**

John W. Garrett was born into a family of Baltimore bankers in 1872. His eponymous grandfather had been the president of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad from 1858 to 1884. Garrett graduated from Princeton in 1895 and, after continuing the family tradition as a banker, began a diplomatic career in 1901 as Secretary to the U.S. Legation at The Hague. After reprising that role for three years in Rome (1905-1908), he was promoted to the position of U.S. Minister to Venezuela in 1910 and then Argentina (1911-1914).<sup>122</sup> Many years later, in July 1929, the Republican Garrett wisely praised President Hoover's commitment to arms reduction as "the most significant thing in the world."<sup>123</sup> The Baltimore native strongly desired the position as U.S. Ambassador to Italy and Hoover granted his wish in August. At the time of his nomination Garrett was on vacation in the Mediterranean and arranged with the State Department to return to the United States for a few months in order to settle his business interests before reporting to Rome. Assistant Secretary of State William Castle wrote enviously in his diary on the day of Garrett's nomination: "Rome is vacant and Garrett ought to get to his post immediately, if not sooner. A first-class man, especially one who is supposed to know the Service, would have a little more sense. But with Garrett it is only glory."<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> For an analysis of Thomas Lamont's role in the Leffingwell Plan to stabilize the currencies of Italy, France, and Belgium see: G. Migone, *I banchieri americani e Mussolini: Aspetti internazionali della quota novanta*, Turin, Rosenberg and Sellier, 1979, p. 38.

<sup>122</sup> During the First World War Garrett worked on prisoner of war issues as Special Assistant to William Graves Sharp, the U.S. Ambassador to France.

<sup>123</sup> "Garrett Sees Powers in Accord with US", *New York Times*, July 7, 1929, p. 5.

<sup>124</sup> William Castle Diary, August 6, 1929.

When Garrett presented his credentials to King Victor Emanuel III in late September relations between the two nations were largely friendly. The controversy over the quota system restricting Italian emigration to the United States had mostly been resolved in 1927. The remaining disagreement was centered on Mussolini's insistence (and American refusal) that Italians naturalized in the United States retain dual citizenship so that they would constitute a reserve force for the Italian Army in the case of a European war. After Mussolini dropped the issue, Garrett declared in May 1930 that "there has never been a time when Italy and America were on better terms."<sup>125</sup> In the end, the ambassador, who was fluent in Italian, believed that it was not worthwhile for Mussolini to pursue the dual citizenship matter because there were already thousands of recruits that the Italian Army did not have space for.<sup>126</sup> Still, Garrett noted that Mussolini's recent speeches in Florence, Livorno, and Milan "were considered, especially in France as warlike."<sup>127</sup>

An example of the idyllic times in bilateral relations was that the ambassadress Alice Warder Garrett called upon Mussolini in April 1930 before entertaining a group of leaders of the Italian Women's movement: "Before the reception she sent word to Mussolini that she would appreciate some suggestions from him as to how far she might go in her address."<sup>128</sup> Owing to the attempts on Mussolini's life, the *New York Times* mistakenly reported that every member of the embassy staff was armed with a revolver when the prime minister visited the chancellery.<sup>129</sup> Nothing unusual occurred and Mussolini "talked at length of the aims and the ideals of Italian womanhood and gave Mrs. Garrett ample material for her speech."<sup>130</sup> Months

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<sup>125</sup> "Garrett Here, Says Italy is Friendly", *New York Times*, May 27, 1930, p. 36.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> "Garrett Arms Staff to Protect Mussolini, Who Visits Embassy to Advise Envoy's Wife", *New York Times*, December 3, 1930, p. 30. American women gained the right to vote with the ratification of the 19th Amendment on August 18, 1920. Italian women voted for the first time in the local elections of March 1946.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

later the *New York Times* retracted its erroneous statement in its previous article, admitting that the embassy personnel were unarmed during the visit.

In 1931, the Fascist regime created difficulties for the United States representation by arresting American citizens on spurious charges and preventing them from seeing an American consul within 24 hours of their arrest as was the long-standing norm.<sup>131</sup> The following year the United States dealt with the problem of fascist propaganda carried out by Italian consulates which was greeted with enthusiasm by the majority of Italian-Americans. This activity violated the diplomatic norm of non-interference in the internal affairs of a host country.

In May 1930, Garrett signed a five year lease on the palace of Prince Jovinelli in Rome to be the site of the U.S. Embassy.<sup>132</sup> The old embassy building in Piazza San Bernardo was to be razed to widen the street. The inspection report of the embassy written on November 24, 1930, by Foreign Service officer Thomas Murray Wilson noted:

The present quarters have been occupied since July 1, 1930, and are located in the center of the city, opposite the Ministry of War. They are very convenient both to American visitors and the local public. The appearance of the new offices, both from the exterior and interior, is a great improvement over that of the Embassy's former chancery in the Piazza San Bernardo. Space is adequate for the Chancery and Attachés, and the Interior arrangement, while not ideal, is satisfactory.<sup>133</sup>

In February 1931, the United States government agreed to purchase the lot on the corner of Via Boncompagni and Via Vittorio Veneto for the embassy residence and office building. The inspection report summary on February 28, 1931, indicates that the negotiations were completed but that the move would not take place until 1932. Inspector Wilson continued:

When the newly acquired property is satisfactorily and suitably put in order the representation of the United States will be highly creditable indeed. It will still not surpass or even equal the representation of those

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<sup>131</sup> FRUS United States Department of State / Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1931, p. 629.

<sup>132</sup> NARA, RG 59 General Records of the Department of State Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, 1906-1939 February 1931, Box 130.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

countries who, for different reasons than ours, have for long deemed it desirable to house their representatives in large, commodious, historic palaces and to allow large sums of money for lavish entertaining. Rome is one of the important capitals of Europe; its official and social life is extensive and in some respects exacting; there are many different circles which feel they have a direct call on the diplomatic representative stationed here; the cost of living is high, and notwithstanding the representation allowances (of rather recent date) of \$2500.00 for representation purposes, no one but a man of more than comfortable, independent means could take care of the situation. [...] The present chief of mission realizes full the demands of his position and maintains an especially high standard.<sup>134</sup>

The inspection report demonstrates that after years of leasing historic palaces in Rome, the United States was beginning to invest more funds in diplomatic representation through its acquisition of property. Still, state subsidies for social representation remained quite modest in the years of the Great Depression. The different social circles which called on the embassy were Italian government officials, Vatican officials, the “black” aristocracy tied to the Papacy, the American colony in Rome, American cultural associations, and lastly, visiting American officials and politicians. Social obligations occupied a significant portion of embassy staff’s time. Inspector Wilson concluded:

Rome is a highly picturesque capital, the cost of living is high [...] the presence of a court and a society which takes itself very seriously (being composed of families whose personal estimates of themselves and their importance in the world to-day far outweighs the estimates given generally) makes it quite possible to increase ones expenditures to the limits of individual possibilities and individual ambitions or desires. Much according depends upon these, - - yet it would be a great mistake to send officers here who are possessed of small, limited means and, without much larger allowances than those now allowable, expect of them any highly satisfactory degree of representation. Expectations are great, demands innumerable, the actual cost of even moderate living is high, and an officer of even high merit and abilities as far as the actual duties of his chancery work and reporting are concerned, would find it very difficult (even to the point of possible great embarrassment)

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

to live satisfactorily to himself and creditably to the position he strives to fill if he is eternally faced with economic demands beyond his moderate means.<sup>135</sup>

The infeasibility of sending diplomats of modest means to work at the embassy ensured the presence of a socially and economically conservative set of American diplomats which mirrored the qualities of the Roman nobility and the high diplomatic positions in the Italian Foreign Office. Inspector Wilson recommended that the diplomatic and consular personnel in Rome should not be combined: counsel that stood in contrast to the egalitarian ethos of the Rogers Act of 1924.

Throughout the 1930s, the number of Foreign Service officers at the embassy was greatly inferior to that of the post-World War II period. In 1930, Garrett's career personnel was limited to Counselor Alexander C. Kirk, First Secretary Harold H. Tittman, and Third Secretary Selden Chapin. Tittman was responsible for "political reporting; review of Italian and European press and liaison with American and Italian correspondents in Rome" whereas Chapin's duties as Chief of the Chancery were "assistant political reporting; citizenship and military induction cases; claims; liaison with Naval, Military and Commercial Attaches and Consulate; protocol; miscellaneous correspondence."<sup>136</sup>

Rome was a major European capital but its prestige in the eyes of Americans stemmed more from its historical role as a bearer of Western Civilization. The city was considered one of most favorable assignments in the Foreign Service. Vice-Consul John Wesley Jones recalled his first impressions upon arriving in the city in 1935: "I remember taking a taxi from the railroad station up the Via Veneto to the Consulate in the building next to the Palazzo Margherita. I couldn't believe the beauty of the city. After three years in Calcutta, to arrive in a place like Rome was like going from Hades to Paradise."<sup>137</sup> Serving under the conditions of a dictatorship was a common assignment for Foreign Service officers in the 1930s and a

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<sup>135</sup> NARA, RG 59 General Records of the Department of State Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, 1906-1939 February 1931, Box 130.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> ADST interview, John Wesley Jones with Horace G. Torbert, May 11, 1988.

cardinal rule of diplomacy was not to interfere in the host country's domestic affairs. Furthermore, the Germans and Italians constituted a major part of the European diplomatic society and their ancestors had played a major role in the development of Western heritage. As noted by the historian Hugh De Santis the diplomats saw Germany and Italy as "civilized countries" that would "gradually abandon their repressive systems of government."<sup>138</sup>

Embassy Counselor under Garrett was Alexander Kirk (1888-1979), a scion of the Chicago based James S. Kirk Company, one of the largest soap distributors in the United States. Kirk attended the Groton School in Massachusetts and held degrees from Yale, Harvard Law and Sciences Po of Paris.<sup>139</sup> He was an undeclared homosexual who had entered the State Department as William Phillips private secretary in 1915.<sup>140</sup> He embraced the manners of European high society and was known for his eccentricity, sharp mind, and excellence in protocol. His Colleague George Kennan recalled in his memoirs:

He was a carryover from an older day when to be rich entitled you to be eccentric, and he made the most of the privilege....Deliberately, I think, as a gesture of defiance and self-protection, and in the indulgence of a fine sense of the theatrical, Kirk worked at giving himself the aspect of exactly that sort of American career diplomat of which the American philistine has always been the most suspicious: elegant, overrefined, haughty, and remote.<sup>141</sup>

In 1932, the tabloid journalist and film producer Mark Hellinger described the Chicagoan Kirk as a "tall man with a decided British accent": a striking characterization because the latter had never served in England yet had apparently adopted British mannerisms, thus conforming to the stereotype of the American diplomat which angered the public as alluded to by Kennan.<sup>142</sup> It was this type of behavior which had motivated Assistant Secretary of State

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<sup>138</sup> H. De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence: The American Foreign Service, The Soviet Union, and the Cold War, 1933-1947*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1980, p. 79.

<sup>139</sup> Kirk's time at the Groton School was the origin of his relationship with Groton alumni William Phillips and President Roosevelt.

<sup>140</sup> K. Weisbrode, *The Atlantic Century*, p. 51.

<sup>141</sup> G. F. Kennan, *Memoirs 1925-1950*, New York, Pantheon Books, 1967, p. 113.

<sup>142</sup> M. Hellinger, "Broadways of the World", *The Nashville Tennessean*, December 28, 1932, p. 4.

Wilbur Carr to formulate the Rogers Act of 1924. From Rome, Kirk maintained a correspondence with the Lithuanian-American art historian Bernard Berenson who lived at the Villa I Tatti in Florence. His letters to Berenson reflect an often unhappy individual and a revulsion toward the surveillance of foreign diplomats by the fascist regime. A letter from July 22, 1933, declared: “Even my kodak eye is suffering from progressive myopia and I see lurking political menaces even in the leaves of the trees, I fester with disgust of governments and peoples.”<sup>143</sup> Six months earlier Adolf Hitler had become Chancellor of Germany.

As Counselor of Embassy Kirk managed the embassy as chargé d’affaires for two or three months each year. Throughout his long tenure in Rome, he dedicated much time to social representation by organizing large luncheons and dinners which were held at his mother Clara’s house at the Villa Spada on the Janiculum.<sup>144</sup> He was close to the House of Savoy and participated in the ceremony of King Victor Emanuel III and Queen Elena for their first official visit to the Vatican after the signing of the Lateran Accords in 1929. By 1935, Kirk developed a close relationship with Mussolini’s son-in-law, the Minister of Popular Culture the Count Galeazzo Ciano; the ministry occupied an older building in Via Veneto close to the U.S. Embassy.<sup>145</sup> Kirk leased the Villa Blanc on the Via Nomentana located nearby Mussolini’s Villa Torlonia.<sup>146</sup>

Toward the end of March 1938, Kirk began a nine-month stint as chargé d’affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow.<sup>147</sup> He arrived at the Soviet capital at the time of the purge of the Trotskyist elements in the infamous “Trial of 21”. At this time foreign diplomats were

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<sup>143</sup> Kirk to Bernard Berenson, July 22, 1933. Bernard and Mary Berenson Papers, Villa I Tatti.

<sup>144</sup> For example “Fun Times in Rome”, *Chicago Tribune*, May 2, 1932, described the party for the Princess Mafalda at the Villa Spada. Present was her husband, the Prince of Hesse and members of royal families from other nations.

<sup>145</sup> See: B.W. Pointer Jr., *Mussolini’s Rome: Rebuilding the Eternal City*, New York, Macmillan, 2005, pp. 116-117.

<sup>146</sup> The American diplomats in the late 1930s were concentrated in the Nomentana area of the city. Consul John Wesley Jones lived in an apartment at the intersection of Via Massawa and Via Nomentana, across the street from the Villa Blanc.

<sup>147</sup> See: E. Guastone Belcredi, *La Carriera: Pagine di vita diplomatica*, Catanzaro, Rubettino, 2006. for an excellent first hand account of life in the segregated diplomatic quarter of Moscow during the Soviet purges of the 1930s.

generally not permitted to interact with Soviet officials and citizens.<sup>148</sup> In April 1939 Kirk was assigned as chargé d'affaires in Berlin, a position he held until September 1940.<sup>149</sup> He was in Berlin for the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and often met secretly with the German resistance leader, Count Helmuth von Moltke.<sup>150</sup>

### **1.5 Ambassador Breckinridge Long, 1933-1936**

From April 1933 until June 1936, the U.S. Ambassador in Rome was the lawyer Breckinridge Long who was rewarded by FDR for a hefty campaign contribution to the Democratic Party in 1932. Described as spare, courteous, and soft-spoken, the presbyterian Long was born into a wealthy landowning Missouri family in 1881.<sup>151</sup> The first ambassador to reside at the Villa Taverna, he was generally friendly to the Fascist regime and developed strong ties with members of the American expatriate community who had married into important Roman social circles. One such example was Mary Rowan of Los Angeles, California whose husband Domenico Orsini was Prince Assistant to the Pontifical Throne. The Orsini and Colonna families were termed the “head of Catholic laity in the world” by the

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<sup>148</sup> The historian John Harper notes that “the awful spectacle of the great purge” was an experience that “profoundly marked in particular Kirk, Kennan, and Bohlen.” See: J.L. Harper, *America and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-1948*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 13.

<sup>149</sup> J.M Thomàs, *Roosevelt and Franco During the Second World War*, New York, Palgrave MacMillan, 2008, p. 37.

<sup>150</sup> A. Nelson. *Red Orchestra: The Story of the Berlin Underground and the Circle of Friends who Resisted Hitler*, New York, Random House, 2009, p.125.

<sup>151</sup> D. Acheson, *Present at the Creation, My Years at the State Department*, p. 12. Long had served as Assistant Secretary of State during the Wilson administration, where he first became acquainted with Roosevelt, then serving as Assistant Secretary of the Navy. After an unsuccessful run for a U.S. Senate seat in Missouri in 1922, Long lived in Maryland and practiced law in Washington D.C. In 1928, he worked alongside Democratic senators Glass, Tydings, and Walsh to create the party’s platform. See: “Builders of Platform: Ten Senators and Other Notables Among the 55 Members”, *New York Times*, June 28, 1938, p. 8. In the campaign he described the Republican candidate Herbert Hoover as an “autocrat by training”; and criticized the religious antagonism brought against the Democratic Party’s candidate, the Catholic Al Smith, by recalling the original settlers of New England who fled religious persecution in the early Seventeenth Century. See: “Long Criticizes Hoover; Calls Candidate’s Methods Bureaucratic; Will Support Smith”, *New York Times*, October 28, 1928, p. 34.

ambassador in his diary.<sup>152</sup> In fact, Rowan, who took the name of Princess Orsini, acted as a liaison between Pope Pius XI and Long which enabled the former to communicate with President Roosevelt in case of emergency. The previously mentioned Count Giulio Senni of the Italian Foreign Office was another close contact of the embassy for many years.<sup>153</sup> Lastly, Long developed a close working relationship with Margherita Sarfatti: Mussolini's mistress and biographer. In addition to frequent meetings with Sarfatti, the ambassador wrote a letter of introduction on her behalf to influential members of New York and Washington D.C. society and also to President Roosevelt before her voyage to the United States in the spring of 1934.

On July 11, 1934, Long described his activities with satisfaction in a letter to his client and friend, the Admiral Carl T. Grayson: "The interplay of politics and the contacts with the personages has been about as interesting an experience as a person could have in this day and generation - - comparable in Rome now to the situation which existed in Washington during the War as regards the gathering of responsible heads."<sup>154</sup> The following month Foreign Service inspector Homer M. Byington Sr. noted in his report:

The Ambassador runs his own Embassy and completely dominates the Counselor. He even handles details which are more often left to subordinates. Harrison serves as his Flag Lieutenant and does little chancery work. Kirk supervises the chancery work which is done by Bay and the reporting by Tittman. [...] The Ambassador's personality and spirit of service prevail throughout the Mission and while he is in charge there is little left for the subordinates to do other than follow his directions.<sup>155</sup>

Long corresponded directly with President Roosevelt often passing over Secretary of State Cordell Hull. His February 8, 1935, letter to the president conveyed an accurate understanding

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<sup>152</sup> BLP, Diary, October 16, 1935, Box 4.

<sup>153</sup> Senni who had served as an Italian Consul in Cairo during the First World War. As previously noted In Count Senni married Mary Gayley of Philadelphia in 1908. Gayley's father James had been vice-president of the U.S. Steel Corporation.

<sup>154</sup> Long to Admiral Cary T. Grayson July 11, 1934, BLP, General Correspondence (1903-1947), Box 109.

<sup>155</sup> NARA, RG 59 General Records of the Department of State Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, 1906-1939 , August 1934, Box 130.

of the Mussolini-Laval accord between Italy and France as practically amounting to an alliance to prevent German expansion after the Saar plebiscite of January 13. According to Long the pact developed out of the fear that without strong international opposition Hitler would “be emboldened to pursue his Pan Germanic ideas into the fields of former German territories and Austria.”<sup>156</sup> Regarding Italian territorial ambitions in Africa, the ambassador knew that sent 30,000 soldiers had been sent out of Italy while new maps of Ethiopia were being carefully prepared after the Wal Wal incident of December 5, 1934. One of his most important sources of information on the Ethiopian question was his landlord, the Milanese industrialist Count Gilberto Borromeo Arese. Long explained the developing situation to Roosevelt on February 15:

I also believe that the British ambassador is less than frank with me. I had a conversation with him last night in which he minimized the whole movement in Abyssinia and said that in his opinion all that was necessary was for the Ethiopians to withdraw twenty miles and establish a neutral zone; that the Italians had no intention of joining Eritrea with Somaliland around back of British and French Somaliland; and that he felt 20,000 to 25,000 troops would be all that Italy would send. [...] The Abyssinian movement is not popular in Italy. I hear from all sides that the sober and thoughtful people are from enthusiastic. The wealthy class is still wondering about how it is going to be paid for. They have heard that France is going to do it, but they are not quite sure. If France does not do it, they will have to. The poor people that have to go in the ranks of the militia are objecting strenuously. Of course there is always that enthusiastic age of youth which accepts any military activity as a venture. But by and large, as I hear it from all over Italy, it is not a popular movement.<sup>157</sup>

Six days later, amid growing tension between the major European powers Long wrote to Roosevelt: “There is no doubt in my mind that Europe is headed straight for war. Italy is practically on a war basis today. [...] A great deal of noise and publicity is attending the embarkation of small quantities of troops from Naples. Nothing is being said of the vast mobilization in Sicily. It is estimated there are 100,000 men mobilized in that part of Sicily

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<sup>156</sup> Long to Roosevelt, February 8, 1935, BLP, General Correspondence (1903-1947), Box 114.

<sup>157</sup> Long to Roosevelt, February 15, 1935, BLP, General Correspondence (1903-1947), Box 114.

from Messina down to Siracusa.”<sup>158</sup> Long perceived a European war as highly probable within the following two years and foresaw that Japan would overrun mainland China and occupy the Soviet Union’s full attention. He speculated that such a turn of events would leave the United States out of the conflict and noted in a Wilsonian tone: “I hope with every fervent wish that we can stay out of the devastating show and fulfill our destiny as trustee of the future of the civilization which we have in American and with which we can subsequently revive the world.”<sup>159</sup> Roosevelt responded on March 9: “I fear I must agree with you about the general situation. [...] These are without doubt the most hair-trigger times the world has gone through in your life time or mine.”<sup>160</sup>

In late spring of 1935 Long returned to Washington D.C. to consult with his doctors. Assistant Secretary of State William Phillips recorded in his diary on June 11: “Breck Long lunched with me today at the Club [...] He is as puzzled as we all are with respect to the Italian-Ethiopian expedition, but says that all Italians believe that a European war will probably come and he seems to feel the same way.”<sup>161</sup> Three days later Phillips reported that the British war correspondent Sir Percival Phillips had recently come to Washington from Abyssinia and “he thinks Mussolini crazy like the rest of us.”<sup>162</sup> During Long’s extended absence from Rome, Chargé d’Affaires Kirk kept the ambassador and department informed of noteworthy developments. As a confirmation of Kirk’s contacts with the highest level of fascist authorities, in this case almost assuredly Galeazzo Ciano, he wrote on June 24:

I cannot in honesty tell you that there is nothing going on but I can honestly say that I do not think affairs here are of enough importance to prevent you from taking a good rest until October. I say October because in a recent conversation with a young gentleman conspicuously placed in the Fascist hierarchy I was assured that we could look forward

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<sup>158</sup> Long to Roosevelt, February 21, 1935, BLP, General Correspondence (1903-1947), Box 114.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Roosevelt to Long, March 9, 1935, BLP, General Correspondence (1903-1947), Box 114.

<sup>161</sup> William Phillips Diary, June 11, 1935, Box 4 Folder 1.

<sup>162</sup> William Phillips Diary, June 14, 1935, Box 4 Folder 1.

to a peaceful summer but that no guarantees could be given for the autumn.<sup>163</sup>

Kirk met with Mussolini to present a note from Roosevelt which expressed hope for a peaceful settlement to the Abyssinian question; the meeting was arranged upon the suggestion of Italy's colonial competitors: the British and French envoys to Rome.<sup>164</sup> In the late summer, on the eve of the invasion of Ethiopia, bilateral relations between the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Italy had plummeted. On September 4, Long returned to the Eternal City and noted in his diary: "Mussolini's reply was 'It is too late'. It was always 'too late'. More than a year Italy made her preparations to do just what she is doing today and has prosecuted the thing through."<sup>165</sup> The previous January Roosevelt had proposed to Long to send a similar note as that which was delivered by Kirk several months later, but the ambassador had maintained that the Abyssinian situation was "too far away and outside our bailiwick" and correctly believed that Mussolini's determination to invade Ethiopia could not be changed.<sup>166</sup> Long did not view Kirk's initiative as helpful, although he surmised that the damage might be limited because "no one outside of a few people in London, Paris, and Washington knew anything about it."<sup>167</sup> The ambassador's consideration of Ethiopia as outside of the American sphere of influence is an interesting commentary on the role of the United States in international affairs at this time due to geographical distance and isolationism. Roosevelt's trump card was the vast industrial potential of the American economy whereas the projection of military force remained the domain of European powers. Shortly after his return Ambassador Long reported on September 6:

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<sup>163</sup> Kirk to Long, June 24, 1935, BLP, General Correspondence (1903-1947), Box 114.

<sup>164</sup> In the United Kingdom the conservative Baldwin government was installed on June 7. Differently than the preceding MacDonald Government, the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in October would be considered a direct challenge to British supremacy in the Mediterranean as signified by the role of Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden.

<sup>165</sup> BLP, Diary, September 4, 1935, Box 4.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

Every man, woman, and child in Italy today hates England. Even if this affairs should be settled amicably, I am afraid it will leave its permanent impress upon international relations. It will take years, if they should start today, to change public sentiment in favor of England and to reestablish the cordial and most historic relations between the two countries which existed up to four or five months ago.<sup>168</sup>

On September 17, in an audience with Mussolini, Long took the unusual step of speaking “as an individual and without in any way involving my Government.”<sup>169</sup> The conversation was held in French because Long had not mastered Italian during his time in Rome and Mussolini’s English was limited. The ambassador suggested mutual concessions on behalf of France, Britain, and Italy as a way of averting conflict in the Mediterranean. Mussolini repeated that it was too late for Italy to abandon its plans. Long noted in his diary that the war had been planned for some time, as indicated by the production of half a million sun helmets in Italian factories in 1934. Mussolini commented: “This is purely a colonial matter for Italy. It must continue as a colonial and local matter. If it is continued that way, just as was the action of France in Morocco, there is no need for it to involve anybody.”<sup>170</sup>

Envy and disapproval of Long’s personal diplomacy with Mussolini was the subject of Under Secretary of State William Phillips’ diary entry on September 20, 1935:

Breck Long has done an astounding thing.... A telegram received today reported that he had in his interview with Mussolini on the 17th presented his plan to him as his [Long’s] personal ideas. It is amazing that Breck would be so naive as to think that Mussolini would fall for the idea that these were merely his personal thoughts and not in some way authorized by the Department. It strikes me as the most improper action I have ever known a diplomatic officer to make. We sent him a telegram today calling him down mildly, but if he had been a service man bricks of all kinds would have fallen on his head.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Long to Roosevelt, September 6, 1935, BLP, General Correspondence (1903-1947), Box 114.

<sup>169</sup> BLP, Diary, September 17, 1935, Box 4.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> William Phillips Diary, September 20, 1935, Box 5, Folder 1.

As a career man, Phillips' comments represent an interesting perception of the personal initiative undertaken by the political appointee Long. Six days after the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, Phillips noted in his diary on October 10:

A very alarming telegram from Breck Long today stated that in case the Italo-Ethiopia plan is not settled at Geneva we should be prepared for a sudden outbreak of hostilities between Italy and England [...] The position of Italy is concentrated and strategic, and Long mentioned that the ninety miles which separate Sicily from Tunis have been strongly fortified in order to cut the western from the eastern Mediterranean. According to Long: 'Italy is today a veritable war machine forty million strong, directed by something akin to genius and committed to that leadership with a unanimity, a fervor and a fanaticism almost incredible.'<sup>172</sup>

Clearly, Long had become enthralled by Mussolini's charisma and determination to carry on in the face of strong British opposition; his comments regarding the dictator's domestic popularity at this time strongly support Renzo De Felice's referring to this period as the "years of consensus".<sup>173</sup>

In the aftermath of the invasion of Ethiopia, Long was heavily criticized by the liberal wing of his own Democratic Party for advising Roosevelt against the imposition of an oil embargo on Italy. The ambassador faced a delicate situation as he sought to maintain cordial ties with Italy with his desire to preserve the sanctity of the rule of law. He feared that alienating Mussolini would convince the latter to break off diplomatic relations with the United States, thus ending the possibility of influencing Italy in the future. This fear was shared by James Dunn in Washington who wrote that the Italians "may turn upon us the full force of their efforts to extricate themselves from the difficult position which they face."<sup>174</sup> In the end, the Roosevelt administration placed an embargo only on shipments of munitions and war implements. As a result of a conversation with Deputy Foreign Minister Fulvio Suvich, Long wrote in his diary on November 22:

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<sup>172</sup> William Phillips Diary, October 10, 1935, Box 5, Folder 1.

<sup>173</sup> R De Felice, *Mussolini il Duce gli anni del consenso 1929-1936*, Turin, Einaudi, 1974.

<sup>174</sup> Dunn to Hugh Wilson, November 12, 1935, quoted by K. Weisbrode in *The Atlantic Century*, p. 48.

I see a distinct change in our relations. Suvich has already told me that he considered our action a breach of neutrality. Since the United States did not have any obligation to the Covenant of the League of Nations, the oil embargo and ban on war materials was considered more offensive. [...] To break relations with us would be good politics for them. If they can't buy from us they can make a bold gesture to the world [...] In the meantime I expect to have personally a very uncomfortable time in Rome and will probably soon have to walk rather than use gasoline to ride, and refrain from association with Italian people. But I really don't expect to be here very long.<sup>175</sup>

Differently than expected, bilateral relations improved at the beginning of the new year as Italy sought to break its diplomatic isolation. On January 6, 1936, Long hosted Suvich, Prince and Princess Pietro Colonna, Marchese Patrizi and his wife for dinner.<sup>176</sup> In the course of the evening Suvich indicated Mussolini's wish to expand trade with the United States, but Long responded that he did not believe it was the right moment.<sup>177</sup> The United States government was hesitant to irritate the United Kingdom by aiding Italy's circumnavigation of the sanctions regime.

The failure of the League of Nations to stop Italian aggression destabilized Europe. In March 1936, Germany violated the Versailles and Locarno Treaties by reoccupying the Rhineland and the Italian-German partnership was evident shortly after the Spanish Civil War began the following July. The majority of Americans were preoccupied with the devastating effects of the Great Depression and did not closely follow the latest international developments. In this period, isolationist populists such as the Democratic senator from Louisiana Huey Long developed a wide following through criticism of banking practices and the unequal distribution of wealth in American society.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> BLP, Diary, November 22, 1935, Box 4. Fulvio Suvich was the the Italian Deputy Foreign Minister.

<sup>176</sup> BLP, Diary, January 6, 1936, Box 4. In this case it is most likely that Marchese Patrizi was Giovanni Patrizi di Montoro Naro (born 1895) who married the American Fanny Billings in 1927.

<sup>177</sup> According to Aristotle Kallis, Suvich wrote several memoranda criticizing Mussolini's ever closer relationship with Hitler's Germany after the invasion of Ethiopia. See: A Kallis, *Fascist Ideology: Territory and Expansionism in Italy and Germany: 1922-1945*, London, Routledge, 2002, p. 73.

<sup>178</sup> Long was assassinated in September 1935

The invasion of Ethiopia and the subsequent sanctions divided the Rome diplomatic corps into two camps. Long recorded on February 19, 1936:

Social functions in diplomatic society in Rome between the Italians and the sanctionist countries ceased. No Italians were allowed to go to the Embassies or Legations of sanctionist countries without permission. [...] The Italians cannot be asked to the same house of representatives of sanctionist countries. The English are never asked anywhere. The French are excluded. [...] We are asked of course to both sections. The sanctionists ask us, but we find only the representatives of other sanctionist countries. The Italians ask us, and we usually find only Italians, we being the only foreigners. [...] There is a very real bitterness of the part of the people of every walk of life, but it is very marked in those sections of society which have been in the habit of seeing a good deal of the British and French Ambassadors and members of their staffs, and not only criticism but condemnation is more the rule than the exception.<sup>179</sup>

Long resigned due to health reasons in late June 1936. As Assistant Secretary of State in June 1940 he outlined a method to deny emigration visas at American consulates in Europe in the midst of the Jewish refugee crisis. In December of the same year he became known as a supporter of a proposed \$100,000,000 credit to Franco's Spain as an assurance that the Spanish dictator would not enter the war on the side of the Axis.

## **1.6 The Naples Consulate General, 1931-1936**

Throughout Long's tenure in Rome he was assisted by Coert Du Bois who had returned to Naples as consul general in July 1931.<sup>180</sup> The ambassador utilized Du Bois as his deputy for consular affairs and rarely contacted the other consulates.<sup>181</sup> Consequently, the Naples office

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<sup>179</sup> BLP, Diary, February 19, 1936, Box 4.

<sup>180</sup> After three and a half years in the East Indies, Du Bois returned to Italy in 1930 for a seven month assignment as Consul General in Genoa. On July 30, 1931, he was transferred to Naples by his friend and former supervisor Homer M. Byington Sr. then serving as Chief of Personnel in Washington.

<sup>181</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, 1906-1939, Box 105, Naples April 1936. Du Bois had an excellent relationship with Ambassador Long; the two men had previously collaborated on visa issues at the State Department in Washington D.C.

served as an important clearing house of information and “dished out the quota numbers to other consular offices and in general made visa policy.”<sup>182</sup> In 1933, Du Bois implemented a system of political and military reporting for all of the consulates in Italy with the assistance of Counselor of Embassy Alexander Kirk. In addition to Campania, the consular district included the regions of Puglia, Calabria, Basilicata as well as Eritrea and Italian Somaliland.<sup>183</sup> A workload chart of the ten consulates in Italy prepared for the April 1936 inspection of the Naples facility demonstrates that in the preceding year said facility had been by far the busiest of the ten in terms of invoices, citizenship services, immigration services, notarial services, veteran’s bureau cases, total correspondence and fees collected.<sup>184</sup> This outsized role is mostly attributable to emigration to the United States at the turn of the Twentieth Century; in March 1936, Foreign Service Inspector J. Klahr Huddle judged Naples as one of the most crucial half dozen American consulates in the world.<sup>185</sup> Under Consul General Du Bois’ direction in 1936, the office boasted eight career Foreign Service officers, doubling the four, in addition to the ambassador, stationed at the embassy. As of December 31, 1935, it was estimated that nearly 9,000 Americans resided in the Naples consular district. Inspector Huddle noted that “Practically all of these persons are of Italian extraction, many of them having been naturalized recently. Although Americans are found everywhere, even in remote villages in the interior, they are most numerous in or near Naples, Bari, Avellino, Salerno, and Potenza.”<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 318. In the 1930s the U.S. maintained consulates in most of the major cities in Italy: Florence, Livorno, Milan, Palermo, Trieste, Turin, and Venice. The Messina office was closed in 1934. Consulate Generals were in Genoa and Naples.

<sup>183</sup> In the 1930s, the Naples consular district was comprised of Eritrea and Italian Somaliland in addition to the Provinces of Avellino, Benevento, and Naples in Campania; the Provinces of Bari, Brindisi, Foggia, Ionio (Taranto), and Lecce in Puglia; the Provinces of Matera and Potenza, in Basilicata; and the Provinces of Catanzaro, Cosenza, and Reggio Calabria in Calabria.

<sup>184</sup> Chart is found in NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, 1906-1939, Box 105, Naples April 1936.

<sup>185</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, 1906-1939, Box 105, Naples April 1936.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

As a port city near the geographic center of the Mediterranean Sea, Naples had become an important crossroads for American diplomats traveling to and from the United States on American shipping lines. In the city itself, the office was considered the most important establishment of its kind, surpassing its British, German, and French counterparts. Inspector Huddle commented on the facility's reputation: "Its prestige is based on a record of fair treatment and square dealing extending over a period of many years and this is particularly gratifying when the character and volume of its work are considered."<sup>187</sup> At this time the consulate general was still located in the Villa Coccozza at the corner of Via Cuma and Via Nazario Sauro in Santa Lucia. Huddle noted:

The location of these quarters is ideal in every respect. The building faces onto the bay and the broad boulevard that runs along the water front. It is situated about midway between the hotels patronized by visiting Americans and the docks for passenger vessels [...] It is also conveniently located to both the business and residential district of the city and no location could be found more desirable from the standpoint of the local public. [...] The consulate building presents an excellent appearance from the exterior and in fact is one of the best looking buildings along the water front. The interior of the building is in good repair and most of the rooms present an attractive businesslike appearance. [...] The building was designed for the living quarters of the Marchese Coccozza and no thought was given to office purposes [...] Occupying the whole building enables the Naples consulate to handle the immigration work for the whole of Italy.<sup>188</sup>

The consulate general also served as a training post for young vice-consuls who arrived in pairs from Washington for a period of six months to a year. Consul General Du Bois filed monthly efficiency reports on these new officers according to the theory that "if they were found to be hopeless in this first period of service, time, money, and feelings would be saved by pulling the string at once."<sup>189</sup> The busy office was ideal for new recruits because it featured every type of work that they might encounter in the course of their career. Du Bois and his

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, 1906-1939, Box 105, Naples April 1936.

<sup>189</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 402.

executive officer Charles Hosmer trained many young vice-consuls who went on to have successful careers in the service such as Walworth Barbour, Woodruff Wallner, Frederick W. Jandrey, and Marselis C. Parsons Jr.<sup>190</sup>

The Naples office had another aspect which distinguished it from other consular establishments: from November 1931 onward the city was the official residence of the Crown Prince of Italy, Prince Umberto of Piedmont in line with the tradition that his son, as heir to throne, was to be born in Naples. Consequently, in the field of social representation Consul General Du Bois and his wife were expected to attend occasional court functions with “the resultant obligations in connection with appropriate dress, transportation, and so forth.”<sup>191</sup> Furthermore, it was standard practice for the consul general and his staff to reserve boxes at the San Carlo Opera House in the winter and to participate in the boating and tennis clubs located along the Riviera di Chiaia. Beyond leisure time, these social functions served to establish ties with the local nobility and businessmen. Inspector Huddle commented that participation by the American consuls in other aspects of city life was considered neither necessary nor desirable due to “the presence of various groups” indicating the organized crime phenomenon.<sup>192</sup> Still, as we have seen both Consul General Du Bois and his mentor Byington made use of the *camorra* for security purposes. For Inspector Huddle, it was sufficient that nearly every officer had “a circle of Italian friends of good standing” thus providing “an adequate acquaintanceship with the local community.”<sup>193</sup>

The Consul General’s wife may appropriately fulfill her obligations to Italians by an occasional at home, as dinner parties are not customary among the better class Neapolitans. The Consul General and his wife will also find it necessary to entertain Italian officials somewhat extensively on the occasion of the visits of the American Naval vessels, or for example the visit of a Secretary of State, as Italian officials entertain quite elaborately on such occasions. Many distinguished

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid., p. 400.

<sup>191</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, 1906-1939, Box 105, Naples April 1936.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

American visitors must be taken on drives to nearby points of interest. This is time-consuming [...] and falls on the staff.<sup>194</sup>

Upon his return to Naples in July 1931, Du Bois discovered that the American quota system had again become a major point of friction. Under the system the Italian government chose annually 5000 subjects to emigrate to the United States: a mere 2% of the yearly average of 250,000 in the years preceding World War I. The Italian colonies of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica colonies were unable to absorb enough emigrants to resolve Italy's overpopulation problem, which was particularly acute in the *Mezzogiorno*. Under Louis G. Dreyfus, Du Bois' predecessor in Naples, relations between the consulate and the Italian passport authorities were strained. According to Du Bois, Dreyfus "had rather resented the idea that we couldn't select our immigrants in Italy"<sup>195</sup> The situation for the Naples Consul General was rendered more difficult by domestic political developments in the United States: pressure was brought upon congressmen to obtain visas for the family members of their Italian-American constituents still living in Italy. The congressmen, in turn, implored the State Department and consular officers overseas to approve visas, not knowing that the visa was immaterial without an Italian passport valid for emigration.

Du Bois had no qualms with the practice of the Italian government choosing its own emigrants, although he noted that "in a regime like Fascist Italy the power to issue passports was a valuable political asset" which "could be used to reward those deserved well of the regime or to get rid of those whose presence in Italy might be prejudicial."<sup>196</sup> He therefore decided not to make any suggestions to the Italian authorities about the past activities of quota

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid. Serving as chauffeurs for important American guests was often resented by the consular officials. A colorful episode recounted by the muckraking journalist Mark Hellinger is indicative of the hostility between the press and the Foreign Service in the 1930s. Hellinger and Du Bois along with his wife were the only Americans sailing on a ship from Naples to Tunis, and therefore the former sent a letter to the latter asking if he and his wife would like to share a bottle of wine. According to Hellinger, the response from the room steward came back within three minutes: "Mr. Du Bois says that he has forgotten his glasses and that he regrets he cannot read your note." M. Hellinger, "Broadways of the World", *The Nashville Tennessean*, December 28, 1932, p. 4.

<sup>195</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 381.

<sup>196</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, pp. 381-382. In fact, according to the journalist Richard Massock, Mussolini later bragged of sending "all the gangsters to America".

emigrants who were given passports. In exchange the Italian officials also approved passports for those designated preference applicants by the United States stemming from the domestic political pressure. As a result of this compromise Du Bois recalled in his memoirs: “Our visa problems disappeared like the morning mists.”<sup>197</sup>

Throughout the rest of Du Bois’ tenure in Naples, he remained until December 1936, the only major visa problems stemmed from the Second Italian-Ethiopian War which began in October 1935. The Italian Consul General in New York encouraged American citizens of Italian origin men to enlist in the Italian Army, mistakenly promising that they could all return to the United States without difficulty at the conclusion of their service. In joining the Italian Army, the men took an oath of allegiance to King Victor Emanuel III, and unknowingly lost their American citizenship, thus leaving them as “Wops - non quota aliens” in the words of Du Bois.<sup>198</sup> Many of these men angrily returned to the Naples Consulate General to insist on their American citizenship, but were forced to return to the United States with Italian passports and immigration quota visas, and to wait an additional five years before regaining American citizenship.

In the spring of 1933, Du Bois was selected by the State Department to serve as the American delegate to the Italian Colonial Commercial Fair in Tripoli. He was also under instruction to examine the conditions of African prisoners held in wire stockade concentration camps in Cyrenaica due to complaints of “atrocities and ill-treatment” received in Geneva.<sup>199</sup> Du Bois met with Major General Rodolfo Graziani, who had pacified the local resistance in the 1931 military campaign and whom the consul general described as a “fine-looking big man and all soldier.”<sup>200</sup> Du Bois noted that Graziani’s strategy had been “to start at the east edge of the hills south of Derna, spread a thin line south and then sweep across the hills to the westward driving everything before him and separating each group from its camels and cattle

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<sup>197</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 386.

<sup>198</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 387.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 389.

until he combed them off the Jebel and on to the dry flat country south of Benghazi, a demoralized mass of fugitives without transportation or commissary.”<sup>201</sup>

Du Bois inspected the prisoner camps near *La Strada*: a large military road then under construction. South of Benghazi, he visited El Abiar and Sidi el Magrun. In this region he noted that the Italians were proceeding with a system of gradual release of well-behaved prisoners who could then return to the Jebel: “it was evident that the Italians felt that they had something of a bear by the tail and were letting go of it as fast as they could do so safely.”<sup>202</sup> Despite the thousands of deaths due to starvation in the concentration camps, Du Bois viewed the Italian efforts as a civilizing force: “I saw nothing in the whole prisoner situation to warrant any charges of mistreatment as so reported when I got back to Naples.”<sup>203</sup> In fairness to Du Bois, by 1933 the concentration camps were being dismantled and he likely was given a sanitized tour of the region.

Reflecting in his memoirs, Du Bois believed that Mussolini’s aggressive foreign policy was inevitable due to the dictatorial nature of the Fascist regime. Despite the claims of the Fascist press, the consul general interpreted the December 5, 1934, Wal Wal incident as naked aggression by the Italians against a peaceful fellow member of the League of Nations to establish a pretext for invasion. Due to his experience in Cyrenaica, Du Bois had developed an interest in the political geography of Africa. Therefore, immediately after hearing of the incident, he bought an official map of Italian Somaliland in the nearest bookstore, on which Wal Wal was shown “as a tiny oasis 50 kilometers from the frontier in Abyssinia. [...] The next day every map of the area had disappeared from the bookstores.”<sup>204</sup> Du Bois believed the Ethiopian move was calculated by Mussolini to increase his prestige by rallying public opinion in a difficult economic period and also to irritate the British: establishing control over

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<sup>201</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 393.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 394. The historian Nicola La Banca has termed these actions as genocide. See: N. La Banca, *La guerra italiana per la Libia*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1997, p. 197.

<sup>204</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 395.

the Blue Nile river threatened the lifeblood of Egypt. On October 2, 1935, he listened to Mussolini's general mobilization speech in Piazza del Plebiscito.

On October 10, Du Bois communicated to the other consulates that political reporting methods were to change due to Italy's position as a belligerent nation. As previously noted, at this time Ambassador Long expected a general European war to break out within the following two years. All reporting resources at the consulate general were concentrated on informing the embassy of Italian war preparations and each officer in Naples was expected to consider himself a reporting agent. Weekly circular reports regarding troop and material movements for future East African military operations were sent to the embassy by Consul Howard Withey. In the event President Roosevelt decided to implement economic sanctions against Italy, the consulate general would be responsible for updating the embassy on their effects and the reaction of Italian public opinion. In the April 1936 inspection report of the consulate general, Du Bois' executive officer Charles Hosmer described the wide range of contacts held by the consular officials in Naples. He clarified that his colleagues went to great lengths to avoid "even the appearance of anything in the nature of espionage. If information sought cannot be obtained without incurring the risk last suggested, it is not obtained at all."<sup>205</sup> As evidence Hosmer noted that the consulate general did not send observers to the military sections of the city's port except when a commissioned officer had official duty regarding the arrival of an American vessel:

Persons from whom political information is gained, regularly or intermittently may be grouped as follows: army officers; naval officers; business men living in Italian East Africa; returned soldiers (including officers on furlough); foreign consular colleagues; several professional men; manufacturers; a banker or two; local militia officers; persons engaged in government military and semi-military construction; close connections with high-ranking regular army officers; two quite highly

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

placed officials in the central government at Rome; merchants and shop-keepers; fishermen, laborers, domestic servants.<sup>206</sup>

Du Bois was assisted in reporting to the embassy's military attaché on technical details of the Italian war effort by the young Robert McCloud, vice-consul in Naples and a graduate of West Point.<sup>207</sup> The consul general knew from his previous experience in Port Said that troop transports going to the Red Sea had to pay the tolls for transiting the Suez Canal.<sup>208</sup> Therefore, he made an arrangement with the U.S. Consul in Port Said to report in code the total complement of every troop transport that passed through the canal. McCloud and Du Bois also reported to the embassy that some of the transports were going to Tripoli as they were light-loaded for the port's shallow harbor and did not appear in the Suez Canal reports. Then, after the start of the Spanish Civil War, the port area near Palazzo dell'Immacolatella was often occupied by long lines of Italian soldiers. The ships loaded deeper than the ten meter draft mark painted on the stem indicated that the troops were destined to aid General Franco's nationalists. Du Bois was impressed by the appearance of the army regulars: the Arditi and the Bersaglieri whereas he pitied the Fascist Militia Battalions: "Their uniforms didn't fit, their marching was sloppy, many of them carried guitars tied to their back packs and many were weeping. It seemed pitiful that these poor boys had to be dragged away from homes and farms to go to a horrible country and kill and be killed by a lot of equally pitiful blacks against whom they had nothing and who had nothing against them."<sup>209</sup>

In the end, despite Italy's status as a belligerent nation, Du Bois enjoyed life in Naples. He belonged to the Club Nautico in Santa Lucia which sported the cross of House Savoy with tricolor and fasces as its logo. The Americans enjoyed sailing in the Gulf of Naples and there

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<sup>206</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, 1906-1939, Box 105, Naples April 1936. Hosmer, born in 1889 in Hudson, Massachusetts, had graduated from the University of Maine in 1911. He had previously served in Havana, Santo Domingo, and Sherbrooke. Hosmer who lived in Tennessee became a personal friend of Secretary of State Cordell Hull on his assignment as executive assistant to Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long in 1940.

<sup>207</sup> McCloud was also responsible for increasing American shipping business in Naples. He died of a cerebral hemorrhage while in Naples in December 1938.

<sup>208</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 399.

<sup>209</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 398.

were many dinners and cocktail parties in the international consular corps. Du Bois recalled that the German Consul General Max Imelin was “very much a part of our crowd” and “because he was of the old nobility and violently anti-Hitler, there were no political repercussions.”<sup>210</sup> Du Bois had a few close Italian friends, some of whom had American wives, and “many acquaintances among Italian officialdom.”<sup>211</sup> He concluded:

It was the hey-day of the Fascist regime and if they weren't Fascist, they weren't officials. At the time we saw nothing wrong with them. They were honest, hard-working and very cooperative. They never asked me to do anything that was the least out of the way but they were completely fanatical and there was no discussion of the pros and cons of their system. There were no cons. “*Il Duce ha sempre ragione*” and that settled it. We heard a few small fry, shop keepers and the like, who growled to us about the taxes and the restrictions and mentioned under their breaths “*quel puzzone a Roma*” but on the whole the people took the Regime philosophically and apathetically.<sup>212</sup>

Du Bois' candid recollection that “we saw nothing wrong with them” also indicated that Fascist Italy was not threatening core American interests, thus striking a similar vein to Ambassador Long's observation that Ethiopia was out of the United States bailiwick. For most of the 1930s, the American Foreign Service officers stationed in Italy accepted that Mussolini enjoyed wide domestic approval. Moreover, isolationism dominated American domestic political opinion until well after Du Bois departure from Naples in January 1937.

### **1.7 Ambassador William Phillips, 1936-1941**

Among the founding fathers of the Foreign Service, William Phillips had served as U.S. Ambassador to Belgium from 1924 to 1927. A lifelong Republican, he broke ranks with his party to support Roosevelt in the presidential election of 1932 for which he was rewarded with the powerful position of Under Secretary of State. Phillips' change of allegiance did not sit

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<sup>210</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 402.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 403.

well with his Republican colleague, Assistant Secretary of State William Castle who wrote in his diary on November 8, 1932:

Anyone who looks at the matter must realize that Bill thinks he has chosen the winner. He was annoyed with Hoover because he was not appointed Ambassador to Rome, and that in spite of the fact that Hoover has always liked him, liked him enough to offer him Japan before he sent me there. Bill refused, because all he wanted was Rome, was thinking of his own comforts, not of the joy of real work and real service.<sup>213</sup>

On August 4, 1936, Roosevelt appointed the 58-year-old Phillips to substitute Ambassador Long in Via Veneto. Phillips' letter of credentials signed by the president had purposely left out the "Emperor of Ethiopia" portion of King Victor Emanuel III's recently expanded title; Roosevelt firmly adhered to the Stimson Doctrine which called for non-recognition of international territorial changes executed by force and blamed Mussolini for violating the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 according to which, signatory nations, including Italy, vowed not to resort to war to resolve international disputes.<sup>214</sup> During his tenure as Under Secretary of State, Phillips had formulated the tenets of American neutrality regarding arms shipments with Hull and Roosevelt. He arrived in Italy in September 1936: shortly after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. He later recalled of this time:

When I arrived in Rome, Mussolini was at the height of his popularity. Italy stood high among nations. It wasn't that anybody approved of his methods in Ethiopia, but nevertheless he had annexed Ethiopia and Italy had become an Empire [...] The only instructions I had were to negotiate a new treaty of friendship and commerce between the two countries, the old one being entirely out of date.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> William Castle Diary, November 8, 1932, Box 20. A few months later, on March 17, 1933, Castle continued: "Bill is not a man who will freely discuss matters. He gives an American the impression of not taking things in and this impression must be even stronger with a foreigner." William Castle Diary, March 17, 1933, Box 21.

<sup>214</sup> The episode of Phillips' letter of credentials is recounted in C. Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, Volume I, New York, MacMillan, 1948, p. 470.

<sup>215</sup> William Phillips interview with Wendell H. Link, July 1951, Columbia University.

Like his predecessor Long, Phillips corresponded directly with President Roosevelt “due to the menacing situation in Europe and at his request [...] in addition of course, I kept the department fully informed by cable and secret cipher of the day to day developments.”<sup>216</sup> He did not speak Italian and after conducting his first interview with Mussolini in English on October 6, the two men later made use of interpreters.

Phillips was introduced to influential officials of the Italian Foreign Ministry and the larger diplomatic society by his former private secretary Alexander Kirk, then serving as embassy counselor. He dined with the American socialite the Countess Dorothy di Frasso who lived in Villa Madama on Monte Mario which Phillips described as “one of the most astonishing villas that I have ever - quite inappropriate for the Embassy, too far out of town and much too magnificent for my tastes.”<sup>217</sup> The following evening Phillips dined with Kirk and Foreign Minister Galeazzo Ciano.<sup>218</sup> Others present were the Duchess of Laurenzana, lady-in-waiting to the Queen and the previously mentioned Count and Countess Vitetti.<sup>219</sup> A reception with the heir to the Italian throne, Prince Umberto of Piedmont and his Belgian wife Princess Maria José came on September 30.<sup>220</sup> The following day, Kirk organized a fourth dinner for Phillips where the latter met Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs Giuseppe Bastianini<sup>221</sup>, the Marchese Rolando Dalla Rosa Prati di Collechio (then serving as the Italian Secretary of Legation at Sofia) and his Californian wife Virginia Phillips; and Countess Piella who “holds herself out to be a stalwart propagandist for America in Italy and is the representative in Italy of the Italo-

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<sup>216</sup> W. Phillips, *Ventures in Diplomacy*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1952, p. 203.

<sup>217</sup> William Phillips Diary, September 27, 1936, Box 6, Folder 6.

<sup>218</sup> William Phillips Diary, September 28, 1936, Box 6, Folder 6.

<sup>219</sup> For information on Count Leonardo Vitetti and Countess Vitetti (Natalie Coe) see: pp. 36-37.

<sup>220</sup> William Phillips Diary, September 30, 1936, Box 6, Folder 6.

<sup>221</sup> In light of the imminent German attack on Poland, Bastianini was part of a group including Foreign Minister Galeazzo Ciano and Bernardo Attolico, the Italian Ambassador to Germany, who at an August 20, 1939 meeting at Piazza Venezia convinced Mussolini, at least temporarily, not to enter the coming war on Hitler’s side. A month later, on September 18, Bastianini was named the Italian Ambassador to London, replacing Dino Grandi, and serving as a sign that Italian neutrality would continue shortly after the German invasion of Poland. From 1941 to 1943 he served as Civil Governor of Dalmatia. A member of the Fascist Grand Council, along with Ciano and Grandi, Bastianini challenged Mussolini’s leadership on July 25, 1943.

American Society.”<sup>222</sup> In February 1937, Phillips joined the *Caccia*, Rome’s most prestigious social club located in Palazzo Borghese. On April 13 he recorded in his diary: “I have practically decided to take for the summer Castel Gardena, belonging to Baron Carlo Franchetti, who came to see me the other day and was so delightful that I fell for him and his house at once.”<sup>223</sup>

In 1937, American social representation in Rome was complicated by President Roosevelt’s refusal to recognize the Italian conquest of Ethiopia. Like his predecessor Breckinridge Long, Phillips attempted to navigate between his desire to positively influence Fascist Italy while not condoning its aggression resulting in a sometimes awkward situation, as he noted in his diary on May 8: “I sent a telegram this morning to Washington explaining our embarrassment with regard to attendance at the big military Empire review to commemorate the first year of the Empire, which is tomorrow, and received a reply late in the evening that I should not be present. However, this afternoon I did attend a ceremony in the Piazza Venezia.”<sup>224</sup>

A similar situation developed in Rome due to the ambiguity caused by the Spanish Civil War. In January 1937 the embassy mistakenly invited a representative of General Francisco Franco for a reception. Fearing a backlash in the American press, Phillips was forced to disinvite Franco’s man and apologize for the mistake.<sup>225</sup> It is important to note, however, that he did not object on a personal level to the attendance by Franco’s representative; years later Phillips sympathetically depicted Franco’s cause in his memoirs. His conclusions on the subject stemmed partially from a conversation with the former Spanish King Alfonso in January 1938.<sup>226</sup> Similarly, Foreign Minister Ciano noted in his diary on November 12, 1937, that Phillips had remained impressed by Yvon Delbos’ book *Experience Rouge* which “dealt

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<sup>222</sup> William Phillips Diary, October 1, 1936, Box 6, Folder 6. Countess Piella was the sister of Isabella Howard who had previously been the Italian Princess Bandini who took her married name from the British diplomat Esmé Howard who had served as Ambassador to the United States from 1924 to 1930.

<sup>223</sup> William Phillips Diary, April 13, 1937, Box 6, Folder 10.

<sup>224</sup> William Phillips Diary, May 8, 1937, Box 7, Folder 1.

<sup>225</sup> William Phillips Diary, January 27, 1937, Box 7, Folder 4.

<sup>226</sup> W. Phillips, *Ventures in Diplomacy*, pp. 195-196. Alfonso had cited Moscow’s fifth column activities at the so-called 1936 People’s Olympiad in Barcelona.

with the preparation in Moscow for the Spanish revolution.”<sup>227</sup> Of foremost importance to the ambassador was that bolshevism did not spread to other areas of the European continent from Russia. Along the same line, Second Secretary Samuel Reber, a close associate of Phillips, was equally indulgent and dubiously claimed in the summer of 1937 that “no proof existed to substantiate the rumors of Italy’s continued military involvement in Spain” in a dispatch to the State Department.<sup>228</sup>

At the same time in Naples, the new consul general as of December 1936 was Thomas D. Bowman who had reported the previous September from Mexico City: “The very keenest interest is displayed in Mexico in the Spanish revolution. Many profess to believe that its results may profoundly affect Mexico, bringing a similar conflict here [...] that it will help to encourage by suggestion the resort to violence [...] in part due to the definitely leftist policy of the government.”<sup>229</sup> Jane Byington, the wife of Homer M. Byington Jr., a U.S. Consul then serving in Naples in 1936, recalled that Mussolini’s intervention in Spain was widely unpopular among Italians, and that the wounded and dead soldiers were brought back to Naples under cover of night.<sup>230</sup>

While some of the American diplomats in Italy remained at the very least favorably neutral toward Franco in 1937, tension was rising between the United Kingdom and the European dictators. The British feared a possible attack by Franco on Gibraltar, the loss of which would severely weaken their position in the Mediterranean and constitute a great triumph for Italy’s Atlantic ambitions. As noted by the historian Paul Doerr, in August 1937 “random acts of

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<sup>227</sup> G. Ciano, *Diario 1937-1943*, p. 56. “Gli ha fatto impressione il libro di Delbos “Experience Rouge” in cui parla della preparazione muscovita per la rivoluzione in Spagna.”

<sup>228</sup> H. De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence*, p. 71.

<sup>229</sup> For Bowman quote see: J.W. Sherman, *The Mexican Right: The End of Revolutionary Reform, 1929-1940*, Greenwood Publishing Group, 1997, p.94. Born in Pacific, Missouri in 1886 Bowman had studied at William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri, thereafter working briefly as a printer and publisher. He entered the Consular Service in 1911 and held several posts in Mexico. See: F.M. Carroll, *The American Presence in Ulster: A Diplomatic History 1796-1996*, Washington D.C., CUA Press, 2005, pp. 128-129. Similarly, on May 28, 1938, the U.S. Consul in Seville, Charles Bay commented on the arrest of 18 Americans who were fighting with the loyalists: “When Americans enlist to fight under a foreign flag, they cannot expect our government to worry about what happens to them thereafter.” See: “Rebels Bar Talks with U.S. Captives”, *New York Times*, May 29, 1938, p. 16.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

‘piracy’ occurred in the Mediterranean in which unknown submarines fired torpedoes at Republican Spanish, Soviet, and British merchant ships. Several were sunk. The pirate submarines were assumed to be Italian, but Mussolini admitted nothing.”<sup>231</sup> Harold Callender wrote in the *New York Times* on October 24, 1937: “Probably the greatest obstacle to mutual confidence between Britain and Italy is Mussolini. No man in recent times - hardly even the former kaiser - has been so intensely disliked in Britain as Mussolini has been in the last two years. Hitler is far less irritating to the British. Nearly every utterance of the Duce seems provocative.”<sup>232</sup>

## 1.8 Roosevelt Speaks Out

As previously noted, Ambassador Long in Rome foresaw a European war as highly likely within two years of the beginning of the conflict in Ethiopia, an assessment seconded by Roosevelt. Still, it was not until the Quarantine Speech in Chicago on October 5, 1937, well after his reelection in November of the previous year, that FDR publicly warned Germany, Italy, and Japan against further hostile aggrandizement and acknowledged that America was threatened by “the present reign of terror and international lawlessness.”<sup>233</sup> Liberal elements were heartened by Roosevelt’s clear stance. On a visit to Madrid the U.S. Representatives Jerry J. O’Connell, a Democrat from Montana, and John T. Bernard of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party had been “deeply impressed in favor of the government”. Upon returning to Washington D.C. the two congressmen pressured the State Department in late October to save the lives of Loyalist noncombatants in the Asturias region which had fallen to the

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<sup>231</sup> P.W. Doerr, *British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1998. p. 202.

<sup>232</sup> H. Callender, “Italy’s Mare Nostrum, Or Britain’s Life-Line”, *New York Times*, October 24, 1937, p. 23.

<sup>233</sup> Interestingly, at the time of the Quarantine Speech, William Phillips, Roosevelt’s ambassador to Rome was on home leave. Phillips was skeptical of the effectiveness of Roosevelt’s rhetoric on his mission in Italy. He wrote in his memoirs: “I asked him whether he himself had anything against dictatorships, to which he replied ‘of course not, unless they moved across their frontiers and sought to make trouble in other countries.’” See: W. Phillips, *Ventures in Diplomacy*, p. 207.

Nationalists.<sup>234</sup> Then, on January 13, 1938, William Dodd, a history professor who had served as U.S. Ambassador to Germany from 1933 to 1937, gave a speech at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City in which he declared: “A curious reactionary group in England was willing to see Hitler annex the Balkan states of 80,000,000 population; the same group was willing to see Mussolini dominate Spain. [...] Mankind is in grave danger, but democratic governments seem not to know what to do.”<sup>235</sup> Finally, on March 21, 1938, Secretary of State Hull insisted that he spoke for all Americans by condemning the indiscriminate fascist bombing of civilians in Barcelona. The lives of American Foreign Service officers stationed in Spain were also endangered by this military practice.

Throughout the first half of 1938, the fragile bilateral relations between the United States and Italy continued to waver. Ambassador Phillips tried unsuccessfully to establish a new trade agreement based on the Reciprocal Tariff Act of 1934 with the aim of increasing American exports to Italy. American businesses such as Eastman Kodak, Singer Sewing Machine, and Royal Typewriter had long been irritated by the import quotas imposed by the Italian government.<sup>236</sup> For his part, Mussolini was unwilling to accept a further imbalance of trade due to the continued high American tariffs on imported goods which rendered Italian exports uncompetitive. Militaristic autarchy was the bane of Secretary of State Hull who saw international commerce as a peaceful and liberalizing component of Western heritage.<sup>237</sup>

On March 24, Mussolini’s son-in-law, Foreign Minister Galeazzo Ciano recorded in his diary: “The abyss of incomprehension between us and the Americans keeps getting deeper” regarding Phillips’ request for Italian support in the creation of an international commission to aid political refugees from Germany and Austria.<sup>238</sup> Still, in April, Roosevelt’s envoy was

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<sup>234</sup> “U.S. Will Be Asked to Help Asturians”, *New York Times*, October 24, 1937, p. 32.

<sup>235</sup> Text of William E. Dodd’s Speech available in *New York Times*, January 14, 1938, p. 4.

<sup>236</sup> These companies had lodged formal protests over the import quotas with the U.S. Consulate in Milan in late February 1935.

<sup>237</sup> Interestingly, Roosevelt viewed the situation differently and wrote to Ambassador Phillips on May 17, 1937, “The more I study the situation, the more I am convinced that an economic approach to peace is a pretty weak reed for Europe to lean on.” W. Phillips, *Ventures in Diplomacy*, p. 204.

<sup>238</sup> G. Ciano, *Diario 1937-1943*, Milan, Rizzoli, 1980, pp. 116-117. “L’abisso di incompreensione tra noi e gli americani si fa sempre più profondo.”

pleased by the Easter Accords between Italy and Britain. According to Phillips, after Hitler's visit to Italy in May 1938, Mussolini declined to receive foreign ambassadors "and since he was in fact the government of Italy, there was a very real danger of his being isolated from world affairs."<sup>239</sup> After the Anschluss, which extended the Reich's boundaries to the Italian border, Mussolini's refusal to meet Phillips was the first sign that Italian foreign policy was heavily conditioned by his relationship with Hitler.

As the prospect of a peaceful solution to the international crises dimmed, Roosevelt sharpened his rhetoric in a June 30 speech before the National Education Association in New York City:

I have spoken of the twin interlocking assets of national and human resources and of the need of developing them hand in hand. But with this goes the equally important and equally difficult problem of keeping education intellectually free. For freedom to learn is the first necessity of guaranteeing that man himself shall be self-reliant enough to be free. Such things did not need as much emphasis a generation ago; but when the clock of civilization can be turned back by burning libraries, by exiling scientists, artists, musicians, writers and teachers, by dispersing universities, and by censoring news and literature and art, an added burden is placed upon those countries where the torch of free thought and free learning still burns bright. [...] Books may be burned and cities sacked, but truth, like the yearning for freedom, lives in the hearts of humble men and women. The ultimate victory of tomorrow is with democracy, and through democracy with education, for no people in all the world can be kept eternally ignorant or eternally enslaved.

The fascist organ *Il Popolo D'Italia* retorted that "democracy is at war and in an ideological camp against whom Sig. Roosevelt does not specify, but if our perception does not betray us it might be Fascism."<sup>240</sup> Then, on July 4, an unmissable date that would have been noted by American functionaries in Italy, Mussolini boasted that "the so-called great democracies need

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<sup>239</sup> W. Phillips, *Ventures in Diplomacy*, p. 216.

<sup>240</sup> "Mussolini Bans Wheat Grown in Big Democracies", *Chicago Tribune*, July 5, 1938, p. 11.

not expect to sell Italy any wheat despite this year's short crop."<sup>241</sup> As the summer progressed a major European war seemed imminent owing to the tension caused by Hitler's insistence on self-determination for the German-speaking Sudeten people of Czechoslovakia. In late August Phillips postponed his home leave due to his concern over the international situation; on August 30, the ambassador met with Ciano who confirmed his support for the Germans and blamed the Czechs for the crisis.<sup>242</sup>

### 1.9 The Naples Consulate General, 1937-1939

From 1937 to 1939, the Naples Consulate General featured a talented group of young Foreign Service officers who were part of the 1930s generation which was "the ablest yet recruited to the service".<sup>243</sup> Three of these men later played a key role in shaping American foreign policy toward Italy during the Cold War as Deputy Chief of Mission of the Rome embassy: Homer M. Byington Jr. (1947-1950) Elbridge Durbrow (1952-1955), and Outerbridge Horsey (1959-1962). As we will see they also held influential positions in the State Department in Washington and were closely tied to American and Italian military officers, major landowners in Italy, American senators and congressmen, other government officials, and notable multinational corporations. In this first assignment in Italy, they formed long-lasting friendships in an often hostile atmosphere, although it must be remembered that working under the conditions of a dictatorial regime was a common assignment for Foreign Service officers in the 1930s.

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<sup>241</sup> Ibid. A short wheat crop in 1937 forced the Italian Government to add other substances, in addition to corn, to produce enough bread to feed the nation. With good weather the prevision for the autumn harvest had improved to 256,000,000 bushels, still short by 36,500,000 for the nation's needs. See: "Mussolini Acts to Calm Clamor Over New Bread", *Chicago Tribune*, July 3, 1938, p. 10.

<sup>242</sup> G. Ciano, *Diario 1937-1943*, Milan, Rizzoli, 1980, p. 170. "L'ambasciatore d'America, che doveva partire giovedì, ha dovuto rinviare il congedo. È molto preoccupato per la situazione e mi chiede il nostro punto di vista. Suono il solito disco germanofilo e anticeco: tutte le responsabilità ricadranno su Praga."

<sup>243</sup> "The U.S. Foreign Service", *Fortune*, July 1946, p. 198.

Elbridge Durbrow (1903-1991), a California-born Yale graduate, is known to historians as one of the Foreign Service's foremost experts on the Soviet Union in the Cold War.<sup>244</sup> He was assigned in Naples in late 1937 after three years as third secretary in Moscow. In a 1981 oral interview Durbrow recalled that

the purge period was still going on in Moscow, people were being arrested and sent to Siberia. A girlfriend of mine was arrested the day I left, the night I left. They came by and picked her up. She was sent 10 years to the Kola Peninsula, east of the White Sea. We had our servant - I wasn't married yet - picked up, and two or three people in my office, Soviet citizens. I was in the economic section, as I mentioned before. They were disappeared.<sup>245</sup>

The Soviet authorities clamped down on any Soviet citizen in contact with foreign diplomats in order to obtain information. According to Durbrow the American diplomats knew that

every Soviet citizen in the country who worked for a foreigner must periodically report to his handler. I've never been there myself, to one of the seances, but I'm told that you come in there, you're just a "geisha" . You don't necessarily maybe won't be allowed to see the man's face or the woman's face, whoever's doing the inquiry. And you report what's happened that might be of interest to the OGPU, [...] they may have questioned somebody you'd been talking to, among the guys, and you forgot to or didn't want to tell something that was said, or happened, when those other persons were present, Soviet citizens. Well if they told their handler, and you didn't tell your man what you heard or done or said, something derogatory to the regime, then you're in real trouble.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Durbrow's father, Chandler Durbrow, was a corporate attorney for the Southern Pacific Railroad. Durbrow spent 1927-1928 at the *Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques* of Paris where he studied French and "met many White Russians who complained about the Bolsheviks and became interested in that part of the world." His first assignment abroad after entering the Foreign Service in January 1930 was as a vice-consul in Warsaw where he "got to see how the upper crust lived." See: Elbridge Durbrow interview with John T. Mason Jr., May 5, 1981, Columbia University.

<sup>245</sup> Elbridge Durbrow interview with John T. Mason Jr., May 5, 1981, Columbia University. Durbrows comments provide further evidence for Hugh De Santis' analysis that "The social conditions encountered by careerists in Moscow during the thirties [...] induced a much harsher image of the Soviet Union than that formed by their colleagues in other parts of the world." See: H. De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence, The American Foreign Service, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War, (1933-1947)*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1980, p. 4.

<sup>246</sup> Elbridge Durbrow interview with John T. Mason Jr., May 5, 1981, Columbia University.

Durbrow arrived in Naples with the rank of consul in January 1938. He was charged with overseeing the passport section because “there was a lot of fraud going on” and promptly began Italian lessons and quickly learned to understand and speak the language due to his previous mastery of French. He lived in the Villa Cottrau in Posillipo where Consul General Du Bois and the Byington family had previously resided. He was close to the younger members of Neapolitan aristocratic families who had holdings in Ethiopia and Somaliland, “plantations, that’s what they called them.”<sup>247</sup> One of his close Italian Foreign Office friends was Benedetto Capomazza, Marchese di Campolattaro, born 1903, who as Second Secretary at the Italian Embassy in Washington married Betty Taylor Frances of New Orleans.<sup>248</sup> Of Mussolini Durbrow recalled:

And this is something that shocks all my friends. The propaganda was, he was just as bad as Hitler, really a cohort of his, just as mean to the Jews and everybody else. But it was just a night and day proposition, compared to Moscow. You could meet all the Italians you wanted. They weren’t these tame Italians, like the tame Russians who had to have permission to meet a foreigner. You could take a trip on the train, meet somebody, see him at the hotel, have a drink, and he wouldn’t be questioned. [...] You got a lot of anti-Mussolini stories, grapevine things and anecdotes. [...] It was just a different atmosphere completely. Mussolini only executed about seven people in his whole checkered career. Put a lot of them on the Lipari islands, gave them castor oil. [...] So it was quite a different atmosphere, in the so-called dictatorship. And I still say, all my experience in the Soviet Union was under Stalin, he was by far the champion, for cruelty, for ruthlessness, everything else. He made Hitler look like a little kindergarten kid compared to him.<sup>249</sup>

Thus according to Durbrow, Fascist Italy was a “very casual” dictatorship compared to the Stalinist regime: repression was measured by the diplomats’ freedom of movement and ability

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<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> “Betty F. Hardie is Wed” *New York Times*, April 5, 1939, p. 31. As usual special permission was asked of Mussolini. In the postwar period Capomazza served as Italian chargé d’affaires in Spain, and Ambassador to Sweden, and Israel.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

to converse with their Italian Foreign Office counterparts.<sup>250</sup> He concluded: “I had the pleasure of seeing Mussolini and Hitler down there reviewing the Italian fleet in the summer of 1938. It was a quite a damn good show they put on. All the ships dressed up and [...] steaming by, planes, that sort of thing.”<sup>251</sup> Therefore, in Durbrow’s eyes the May 1938 military display in Naples was praiseworthy but the contemporaneous bombing of civilians by the Italian Air Force in the Spanish Civil War and had been condemned by Secretary of State Hull was forgotten. He was reassigned to Washington in late May 1939.

Another Yale man stationed in Naples was Douglas MacArthur II who was born into one of the most prominent military families in the United States in 1909.<sup>252</sup> MacArthur attended public schools in Washington D.C. until the age of 14 when he transferred to the prestigious Milton Academy. In 1934, he married Laura Louise Barkley, the daughter of Alben Barkley, a Democratic senator from Kentucky and future Vice-President of the United States.<sup>253</sup> In 1937, as vice-consul in Naples he focused on services to American citizens and wrote commercial reports. He was transferred to Paris in 1938 which he recalled as an “intensely interesting time, when war was obviously coming.”<sup>254</sup> MacArthur had an illustrious career that included ambassadorships to Japan, Belgium, Austria, and Iran.

A close friend and colleague of Durbrow and MacArthur was Homer M. Byington Jr. who was born on the small island of Gaiola in the Gulf of Naples on May 31, 1908; his father, Homer M. Byington Sr. was then serving as consul in the city and had rented the lone villa on

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<sup>250</sup> Durbrow’s analysis of the differences between the Soviet Union and Italy was similar to Anthony Eden’s recollection in his memoirs of his first meeting with Mussolini on February 26, 1934: “All the same, Fascism as practised in Italy at this time was less dragooning and pervasive than Nazi rule in Germany.” See: A. Eden, *Facing the Dictators: The Memoirs of Anthony Eden, Earl of Avon*, New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1962, p. 79.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> He was the nephew of his namesake the General Douglas MacArthur, his paternal grandfather was General Arthur McArthur Jr. and his maternal grandfather was Rear Admiral Bowman H. McCalla.

<sup>253</sup> MacArthur decided at the age of 13 that he wanted to become a Foreign Service officer while on a trip to Tokyo where he was “much impressed by the way these young men handled themselves in a totally strange and foreign environment, speaking the language and knowledgeable about everything. So I decided that this might be a very interesting career.” See: Douglas MacArthur II interview with William Burr, May 29, 1985, Columbia University.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

the island. His mother, Jean Gregory Byington, was the daughter of a locally well-known and successful doctor in Norwalk, Connecticut. Byington Jr. (from here on referred to as Byington), was the first of six children.<sup>255</sup> He spent his formative years in England, where he attended elementary school in Leeds and returned to the United States only for family vacations.<sup>256</sup> The years of the First World War were particularly difficult: beyond the strict discipline, the English resented American neutrality.<sup>257</sup>

A crucial turning point in Byington's life came in 1920 when his father was assigned for a second time as U.S. Consul in Naples. From 1919 to 1923 he learned to speak Italian and became friends with both expatriate and Italian children.<sup>258</sup> As there were no English or American schools in Naples, he was homeschooled by his mother with the Calvert system, studied mathematics with one of the consuls on the Naples staff and Latin with Jesuit monks.<sup>259</sup> In 1922, out of fear that Byington would convert to Roman Catholicism under influence of the Jesuits, his father enrolled him at Phillips Academy: a storied preparatory school in Andover, Massachusetts.<sup>260</sup> Upon arrival in Andover, Byington had not passed any single long period of time in the United States since the age of five in 1913. Not surprisingly, he spoke with an English accent, was not familiar with the slang used by the students, had never played American sports, and owned only European clothes yet he adapted quickly and soon "learned to speak and look more American."<sup>261</sup> During the summers he rejoined his family in Naples.

Byington entered Yale on a merit scholarship as a history major in 1926 where "the divide was clear between students who came from wealthy or socially prominent families and those

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<sup>255</sup> Younger brother James became a non-career Foreign Service officer but did not work in Italy.

<sup>256</sup> His father Homer M. Byington Sr. was assigned as U.S. Consul to Bristol, England in 1908.

<sup>257</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 5.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>260</sup> The Byington family was nominally protestant. Phillips Academy exemplified the egalitarian Puritan tradition of New England. The school counts presidents George H.W. Bush class of 1942 and George W. Bush class of 1964 among its alumni.

<sup>261</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 9.

there on scholarship”: a distinction which convinced him it “made practical sense to have money, status, and power.”<sup>262</sup> One summer he worked as a tutor at the resort town of Bar Harbor, Maine and “when he wasn’t working, he had had the run of the resort’s yacht and country clubs and his first extended taste of what it was like to hobnob with the very rich.”<sup>263</sup> Furthermore, in this period he was often invited to attend debutante parties and his name appeared in the *New York Times* society section. After graduating from Yale in 1930, he attended the Crawford School in Georgetown to prepare for the Foreign Service entrance examinations.<sup>264</sup> While in Washington he married a young law student named Jane McHarg whose father, Henry King McHarg Jr., was president of the Detroit and Mackinac railroad and whose grandfather was the millionaire financier and railroad man Henry King McHarg Sr.

Byington’s first overseas post was as vice-consul in Havana in June 1932. He was sent there by his father who was then Chief of Personnel of the Foreign Service. There was no particular favoritism in this assignment: throughout the Great Depression it was standard procedure to send young recruits to nearby countries in order to save the State Department money. By 1932, Byington had lived roughly 16 years in Europe and 8 in the United States. In his short stay in Havana, he performed his duties efficiently but did not establish friendships with locals, nor did he learn much Spanish; he knew that a career based in Europe was the path toward advancement and prestige in the service, and he feared that learning Spanish would typecast him as a Latin American specialist.<sup>265</sup>

In June 1933, Byington was assigned as a vice-consul in Naples by his father. Upon his return to his birthplace in January of the following year, he became the third generation of his family to represent the United States in the city. Surely, Chief Byington Sr. was aware that his son’s ability to speak Italian and considerable familiarity with Naples would be useful to the Foreign Service, but the assignment was evidently nepotistic. In fact, as a demonstration of the

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<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Byington Jr.’s experience is much different from his age cohort who could not find work after the stock market crash on Black Thursday, October 23, 1929.

<sup>265</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 17.

tight-knit community of the pre-World War II service, Byington would be supervised by Consul General Coert Du Bois: a family friend who been his father's protégé in Naples in the 1920s. A special Foreign Service investigative report on the reported "menacing leadership" of Byington Sr. found no evidence of such activity and described his son as "very much like his father [...] a capable chap and his wife is a very able, charming young lady. I think they will be satisfied with the position they can make for themselves in the Service without artificial assistance."<sup>266</sup>

As vice-consul, Byington was responsible for "supervising the settling of estates of elderly Americans who had died in the Naples area, sorting out the many problems of American tourists who got themselves into trouble, servicing the documentary and other needs of shipping companies and seamen [...] and providing support and counsel to American businessmen."<sup>267</sup> His wife Jane later recalled: "We did a certain amount of smuggling off the ships that called."<sup>268</sup> This was fairly standard practice at the time at consulates and the Foreign Service inspection report of the Naples Consulate General written in March 1936 by J. Klahr Huddle determined that the shipping activities of the Consulate were "adequately and satisfactorily performed."<sup>269</sup>

Byington was promoted to consul in 1936 and due to his family history, fluent Italian, and official position, carved out a remarkable social position in Naples. His wife Jane was helpful in this regard as she received a sizable \$200 monthly allowance from her father which, along with investments and the favorable exchange rate allowed the young couple to afford a handful of domestic servants.<sup>270</sup> This development is particularly noteworthy considering the

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<sup>266</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, 1906-1939, Box 105, Naples April 1936. The report consisted of the conclusions of an investigation into the reputed "menacing leadership" of Homer M. Byington Sr.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>268</sup> ADST interview, Jane Byington with Margaret Sullivan, March 8, 1989.

<sup>269</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, 1906-1939, Box 105, Naples April 1936.

<sup>270</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 21.

enduring social distinction between the prestigious embassy corps and its more mundane consular counterpart despite the amalgamation of the two services in 1924.

In order to accurately report on the political situation in foreign countries, Foreign Service officers were expected to meet with influential people in the host society, and in the Neapolitan aristocratic *milieu* this meant large landowners, shipowners, and businessmen.<sup>271</sup> Byington had many friendships with the younger generation of the Neapolitan gentry, some of which dated back to his childhood in the city, perhaps the most crucial was with the Gallotti family, from whom he rented a chalet on the property of the Villa Gallotti in Posillipo.<sup>272</sup> Companions on social outings were the brothers Mario and Giovanni Signorini whose family owned the Cirio food products company which employed several hundred workers in the Naples area and shipped canned tomatoes to the United States.<sup>273</sup> Byington also frequented the aristocratic *Italia* nautical club and frequently sailed with his close friend Prince Giambattista Caracciolo-Carafa, (1910-1978) a zealous anticommunist, and major landowner in Puglia and Lazio who served in the Fascist Air Force in the Spanish Civil War.<sup>274</sup> Although Byington

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<sup>271</sup> Ferdinando Isabella notes that according to the 1936 census, the 44 industrial workers for every 1000 inhabitants in the province of Naples were much lower than the 291 of Varese, 221 of Milan, and 189 of Turin. See: F. Isabella, *Napoli dall'8 settembre ad Achille Lauro*, Naples, Guida Editori, 1980, p. 54.

<sup>272</sup> Born in 1876, Baron Tristano Gallotti had been among the founders of the Naples Tennis Club where Homer Byington Sr. had become a sporting legend. Gallotti had been the Prefect Commissioner of Airola from 1927-1929, was connected to the National Confederation of Fascist Agriculture, and operated a shipping company with dealings in the Italian colonies in Africa. Certainly it was convenient for Gallotti to host Byington who was in charge of shipping at the Naples Consulate General. The grounds of Villa Gallotti had previously served as a gathering place of literary society passing through Naples; the Russian émigré writer Maxim Gorky sojourned in the chalet in 1925 as had the American novelist Sinclair Lewis for several months after his 1928 marriage to the American journalist Dorothy Thompson where he wrote *Dodsworth*. The Byingtons occupied the last chalet on the winding road down to the bay. In the post-World War II period, until 1962, the chalet would serve as the residence of the American consul general in Naples.

<sup>273</sup> The historian Paolo De Marco notes that the villa of the Signorini family in Ercolano was confiscated by the Allies in 1943 because the Cirio company was considered too closely tied to the deposed Fascist regime. See: P. De Marco, *Polvere di piselli, la vita quotidiana a Napoli durante l'occupazione alleata: 1943-1944*, Naples, Liguori, 1996, pp 79-81.

<sup>274</sup> See: C.J. Boyd letter, August 16, 1938, "Introduction to the Mezzogiorno" Association for Diplomatic Training and Studies, available at <http://adst.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Boyd-Clemence-Jandrey.pdf>.

opposed the slaughter of innocents, he preferred Franco to communist rule in Spain.<sup>275</sup> The other Foreign Service officers at the consulate general were also acquainted with Achille Lauro: the city's largest shipowner and future mayor.<sup>276</sup>

Byington's formative years in English schools imparted a class-based interpretation of democracy and a paternalistic understanding that the masses of society needed guidance from an elite.<sup>277</sup> Furthermore, he was a child of a Foreign Service officer and this upbringing imparted a sense of social conservatism and a preference for hierarchically structured organizations that marked his own career in the service: he appreciated formal relationships and did not tolerate insubordination from junior officials. Despite his middle class origin, he adopted patrician mannerisms and never lived without full-time servants in his adult life. He was not overly familiar with American social customs: his handful of years in the United States were all spent in elite institutions. On the contrary as we will see, his realist world view, operating style, personal lifestyle, and habits of mind suggest that his mental makeup was more Italian than American, yet he was charged with representing the United States overseas. With his father he shared the British view of fascism, namely that it was initially beneficial to Italy but was antithetical to Anglo-American democratic traditions. He believed "in a dispassionate sort of way, that Italians (particularly Neapolitans) had very different backgrounds, customs and traditions from those of people of Anglo-Saxon descent. Consequently, they were less likely to be able to govern themselves successfully under a democratic form of government."<sup>278</sup> In short, Byington possessed a traditional European realist worldview similar to his colleague George Kennan which constituted a minority group in the largely liberal-democratic American foreign policy establishment. Wilsonian

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<sup>275</sup> Interview with Homer M. Byington III. When the Spanish Consul in Naples decided to remain loyal to the Republic, the American and other consular corps in Naples assisted him financially.

<sup>276</sup> See: Elbridge Durbrow interview with John T. Mason Jr., May 5, 1981, Columbia University. Lastly, another friend of Byington was the Marchese Aldo Sersale, who became the owner of the Hotel Siranuse in Positano.

<sup>277</sup> Interestingly, over the course of his long career he was never assigned to the United Kingdom.

<sup>278</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 251.

universalist values were considered naive when confronted with daily life in other cultures, particularly Southern Italy under fascism.

In a 1989 oral interview, Jane Byington reflected upon her initially favorable attitude toward Mussolini in the 1930s which is reflective of her husband's judgment at the time:

No, he was fully in power by the time we got there, '34. Well, I'm trying to think back to what I felt then as compared to afterthoughts now. I can't think that I had been brought up with any great horror about dictators. One always says at least he made the trains run on time. He did a number of very beneficial social things in Italy. He had drained the Pontine Marshes and the terrible malaria they had in that area was wiped out because once they got rid of the mosquitoes. He'd settled a number of war veterans on these small farms.<sup>279</sup>

None of the oral interviews with American diplomats indicated that they felt repressed in Fascist Italy, especially when compared to the Soviet Union.<sup>280</sup> Byington was Naples Consul General Du Bois' protégé and the two men often sailed together in the Tyrrhenian Sea. As previously noted Du Bois commented on his time in Italy which concluded in December 1936: "It was the hey-day of the Fascist regime and if they weren't Fascist, they weren't officials. At the time we saw nothing wrong with them. They were honest, hard-working and very cooperative."<sup>281</sup> It was acceptable to criticize one's own government in the United States, while public opposition to Mussolini led to imprisonment and exile.<sup>282</sup> The Byingtons knew that the invasion of Ethiopia had been planned long before the December 1934 Wal Wal incident.<sup>283</sup> At the same time, they would also have been aware that the French and British

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<sup>279</sup> ADST interview, Jane Byington with Margaret Sullivan, March 8, 1989.

<sup>280</sup> Byington eventually disapproved of the Fascist police state when it came to affect him personally as was the case when a relative visiting in Naples faced possible imprisonment for having lost his passport.

<sup>281</sup> Coert Du Bois Papers, Unpublished Manuscript Autobiography, Box 2, Folder 36, p. 403.

<sup>282</sup> Furthermore, Americans had long been noted in Europe, dating back to country's neutrality in World War I for criticizing their own government as means of ingratiating themselves with their host nation.

<sup>283</sup> In my interview with Homer Byington III, I emphasized the question of his father's thoughts on the Ethiopia crisis, and he told me that in the case of conflict between Italy and Britain his father was definitely pro-British.

governments had previously approved of Italy's action. Byington favored a colonial approach to African issues and was no exception to the social mores of his time which held Africans as members of an inferior race.

Byington became the Foreign Service's foremost expert on Italy in the Cold War. Upon his arrival in Naples in January 1934, he served in Italy for 23 of the following 40 years. This is particularly notable when considering that he spent a total of only 15 years in the United States in his entire life.<sup>284</sup> Before retiring in February 1973, he was a firsthand witness to the Mussolini's "Years of Consensus", (the dictator reached the height of popularity after the successful invasion of Ethiopia), the downward spiral of international relations leading to the Munich Conference, the Jewish refugee crisis in Naples after Kristallnacht, the June 2, 1946 referendum, the elections of April 18, 1948, the center-left governments from 1963-1968, the student protest movement of 1968, and the return of political violence to Italy in the "Years of Lead".

From 1937 to 1941, another young officer who established an unusual attachment to Naples was the Vice-Consul Harold Granata who was the son of the Italian journalist, merchant, and banker Genserico Granata.<sup>285</sup> The younger Granata's name had appeared in the *New York Times*, on February 24, 1927, for presenting a wristwatch to Benito Mussolini "in token of our high esteem" on behalf of the Italy American Society.<sup>286</sup> Granata married Maria Stella Gallotti and the young couple also lived in the Villa Gallotti. In February 1941, he moved to Rome as vice-consul when the Naples office was closed. For reasons unknown he was expelled from Italy the following September and re-assigned to Seville.<sup>287</sup> He returned to the Naples after World War II.

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<sup>284</sup> Byington's years in Italy were 1919-1923, 1934-1939, 1945-1950, and 1962-1973.

<sup>285</sup> "G. Granata, Banker and Importer, 73", *New York Times*, February 23, 1942, p. 21. The elder had studied journalism in Rome where he was classmate of Gabriele D'Annunzio before moving to New York in 1894 to take control of the Italian language daily *L'Eco d'Italia*. He became one of the leading figures in the Italian-American community. From 1919 to 1924 he worked in Italy, first in Naples as the Chairman of the Board of the Banca dell'Italia Meridionale, and later in Rome, after the company's merger with A.P. Giannini's interests.

<sup>286</sup> "Mussolini Gets Watch", *New York Times*, February 24, 1927, p. 18.

<sup>287</sup> "Ousted Envoys Assigned" *New York Times*, September 7, 1941, p. 26.

Also present in Naples in 1938-1939 was Vice-Consul Outerbridge Horsey (1910-1983) who belonged to a wealthy Catholic family which traced its roots back to Seventeenth Century colonial Maryland; in fact, he was a descendant of Charles Carroll, a signer of the American Declaration of Independence.<sup>288</sup> Horsey left the United States at the age of eight due his family's wish that he study at Downside: an independent Catholic boarding school located in Stratton-on-the-Fosse, England. He later studied engineering at Trinity College of Cambridge University.<sup>289</sup> Consequently, his cultural and intellectual formation took place in England, and he did not merely ape British mannerisms and habits of thought as was the case with the embassy secretaries identified by Wilbur Carr.<sup>290</sup> As Horsey advanced through his career he was known inside the State Department for his staunch anticommunism and aristocratic bearing, his exotic-sounding name lent credence to the Foreign Service's reputation as an elitist institution. He totaled approximately 16 years of service in Italy, and after Byington was the Foreign Service's most experienced Italian hand in the Cold War.<sup>291</sup>

Vice-Consul A. David Fritzlan was assigned to Naples with Horsey in July 1938: both men were on their first overseas training period.<sup>292</sup> Born in 1914 in British India where his parents worked as Christian missionaries, Fritzlan, like Byington and Horsey, had attended English schools before coming to the United States at the age of 18 where he eventually earned a master's degree at the University of Kentucky. In Naples he worked on visa matters in the aftermath of the events of Kristallnacht on November 10, 1938. Aware of the reputation of the United States as a safe haven for the oppressed, many Jewish refugees, in flight from Nazi and Fascist persecution, hoped to obtain a visa at the consulate. Fritzlan recalled:

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<sup>288</sup> "Miss Mary H. Lee Engaged to Wed" *New York Times*, September 23, 1945, p. 42. Outerbridge Horsey was the sixth man in the family named Outerbridge.

<sup>289</sup> ADST interview Sarah Horsey-Barr with Charles Stuart Kennedy, March 1, 2000. The above-cited article in *Fortune* magazine from July 1946 lists Horsey as the only Cambridge graduate in the Foreign Service as of April 1946.

<sup>290</sup> After continuing his engineering studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Horsey had entered the private sector but found the work unsatisfying and decided to take the Foreign Service entry examinations. He thus entered the career at a later age than the vast majority of his colleagues.

<sup>291</sup> Horsey's years in Italy were 1938-1939, 1947-1952, 1959-1962, 1968-1971

<sup>292</sup> Fritzlan and Outerbridge Horsey returned to Washington in June 1939 to attend the Foreign Service training school.

The problem was the law, it was the quota system. The quota of nationalities depended entirely on place of birth, and the quota was so many for one year and it couldn't be exceeded. That's all. And it was small for certain countries. The quotas were arrived at based on the percentage of population from a certain country in the year 1890, or thereabout. The year was picked arbitrarily in order clearly to keep out certain people.<sup>293</sup>

Partly as a consequence of Roosevelt's harsh criticism of the dictators in late 1937, the majority of the American consular personnel in Naples abandoned their tacit or overt approval of fascism as an effective anticommunist measure. Regardless of their personal sympathies, they were charged with protecting the national interest and executing foreign policy. Mussolini's adherence to the Anti-Comintern Pact on November 6, 1937, was interpreted by the Anglophile American diplomats as an anti-British maneuver. Moreover, American diplomats in Europe were highly skeptical of France's capability to fight a war due to the instability that had accompanied Léon Blum's popular front government. Furthermore, it was becoming evident that fascist intervention in Spain might leave France surrounded by enemies on three sides. Consequently, in the event of further conflict, the diplomats believed that the British would have been left to stand alone against the combined weight of Italy, Germany, and Japan.

Disapproval of Mussolini among the American consuls in Naples was not unanimous. In March 1939, upon arrival in the port of New York for home leave in Wisconsin, Vice-Consul Frederick Jandrey enthusiastically applauded the efforts of the Fascist regime, claiming that "conditions in Italy are vastly improved, and Mussolini is popular with the Italian people. Cities such as Rome and Naples have been completely renovated with new housing facilities for the worker and beautification of parks and roads."<sup>294</sup> When questioned on Italian political

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<sup>293</sup> ADST interview, A. David Fritzlan with Charles Stuart Kennedy, May 29, 1990. Fritzlan went on to become a specialist in Middle Eastern affairs.

<sup>294</sup> "U.S. Vice-Consul at Naples to Visit at Neenah", *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, March 31, 1939, p. 4. Frederick W. Jandrey, Vice-Consul 1936-1939 Jandrey, was born in 1909 in Neenah, Wisconsin and graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1931. After starting his career with four years of service in Calcutta, he was vice-consul in Naples from 1936 to 1939. He returned to Naples with the rank of consul from 1944-1948.

matters, Jandrey replied “it was anyone’s guess if a European war was in the offing.”<sup>295</sup> Given President Roosevelt’s criticism of Mussolini throughout the preceding year and a half, Jandrey’s comments, while aimed at maintaining cordial bilateral relations, also suggest a general approval of fascism. Similarly, Consul William De Courcy, second in command at the consulate general, represented the United States at the June 1939 parade in Naples which celebrated the return of Italian personnel from the conflict in Spain.<sup>296</sup> Certainly, the withdrawal of the American representation from the parade would have been considered an insult by the Italian government, especially in light of the attendance by Foreign Minister Ciano. The move to send a representative must have been coordinated with Ambassador Phillips. It must be noted, however, that it was not until the end of April 1941 that Phillips received instruction from Secretary of State Hull to spread the word that the United States was “determined to oppose the forces of aggression”.<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

<sup>296</sup> “Spanish Army Back in Berlin”, *Detroit Free Press*, June 7, 1939, p. 8. This after the April 1939 Italian annexation of Albania, the December 1938 refugee crisis in Naples caused by exodus of German and Austrian Jews following Kristallnacht, and the implementation of the racial laws in Italy.

<sup>297</sup> W. Phillips, *Ventures in Diplomacy*, p. 307.

## Chapter Two: From Munich to the June 2 Referendum, 1938-1946

### 2.1 A Planned Coup d'État Against Mussolini in 1938?

According to a top secret document produced by the British Foreign Office, the Prince and Princess of Piedmont together with General Pietro Badoglio plotted a *coup d'état* against Mussolini in 1938.<sup>298</sup> On the night between September 27 and 28, the Italian Army would have occupied Rome, Turin, Milan, Venice, and Verona. The following day King Victor Emanuel III, presented with the *fait accompli*, would have been forced to terminate Mussolini's tenure as prime minister. In the event of a successful *putsch*, Princess Maria José would have served as regent for her son Victor Emmanuel the Prince of Naples while an unnamed antifascist lawyer from Milan would have become prime minister. Beyond removing Mussolini, the conspirators' immediate objective was to forestall the possibility of an Italian alliance with Germany in the event that France and Britain declared war on the latter for its actions in Czechoslovakia. The *coup d'état* never occurred, Mussolini was proclaimed the man of peace at the Munich Conference, the Sudetenland was incorporated into the Third Reich, and a major European war was temporarily avoided.

Relations between the House of Savoy and the Fascist regime deteriorated throughout 1938. In late March, Mussolini sought to congratulate himself for the victory in Ethiopia by creating the new rank of "First Marshal of the Empire" which could only be attributed to himself as head of the government and to the head of state Victor Emanuel III thus symbolically rendering the two positions equal. The measure was passed by Parliament on March 30 but the king, as commander of the armed forces under the Albertine Statute, initially refused to sign it. Ciano commented in his diary on April 2: "The Marshal of the Empire question continues. It seems that it has been termed illegal at the royal house. Mussolini ordered the issue to be clarified with the State Council: all fully legal. He sent it to the King with a harsh letter. He

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<sup>298</sup> The document is reproduced in an article by D. Cecchi, "Un Colpo di stato antifascista nel settembre 1938", *Il Politico*, Vo. 44, no. 4, (December 1979), pp. 677-684.

told me ‘Enough. I can’t stand it anymore. I work and he will have to sign.’<sup>299</sup> On April 5-6, Ciano noted that the “crisis between the royal house and regime has begun”.<sup>300</sup> Finally, on July 17, the Italian Foreign Minister recorded that Mussolini was “ever more desirous of ridding himself of the Savoy dynasty at the first possibility.”<sup>301</sup> Therefore, in the months leading up the projected coup of late September, the Savoy dynasty was potentially at risk of being eliminated. Ciano was the liaison between Mussolini and Prince Umberto and it seems evident that the latter attempted to convince the foreign minister to turn against his father-in-law.

Mussolini’s conduct of foreign relations had caused bitter disagreements at the higher levels of the regime dating back to the eve of the invasion of Ethiopia. On September 17, 1935, the U.S. Minister in Switzerland, Hugh Wilson, reported to Secretary of State Hull: “There is another factor which is of real importance, namely, the growing disaffection to Mussolini in Italy. Balbo is against him, so are the King and the General Staff.”<sup>302</sup> The famed aviator Italo Balbo was at this time the Governor General of Italian Libya where he had been visited by the Prince and Princess of Piedmont in the summer of 1935. Two years later, Ciano noted in his diary on August 31, 1937: “Regarding Balbo, Bastianini recounted a conversation with him in Tripoli. In short, Balbo had professed love and faith in my direction. [...] But what do these declarations mean? Oaths of loyalty are made to the Chief: those made among comrades indicate a conspiracy. And I flee from that with all of my energy.”<sup>303</sup> Therefore, Ciano was aware that the possibility of a plot against Mussolini existed. As time passed, Mussolini’s

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<sup>299</sup> G. Ciano, *Diario 1937-1943*, Milan, Rizzoli, 1980, p. 120. La questione del Maresciallato dell’Impero ha code. Pare che a Casa reale si sia parlato della illegalità della cosa. Mussolini ha fatto chiedere un parere al Consiglio di Stato: tutto pienamente legale. Lo ha mandato al Re con una lettera molto secca. Mi ha detto: ‘Basta. Ne ho le scatole piene. Io lavoro e lui firma.’

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., p. 121. “Crisi fra casa reale e regime è aperta.”

<sup>301</sup> Ibid., p. 159. “È sempre più deciso di sbarazzarsi dei Savoia alla prima possibilità.”

<sup>302</sup> Wilson to Hull, September 17, 1935, FRUS, the Near East and Africa, 1935, Ethiopia, RG 59, 763,84/1211 Telegram.

<sup>303</sup> G. Ciano, *Diario 1937-1943*, p. 30. A proposito di Balbo, Bastianini mi ha raccontato un colloquio con lui a Tripoli. In breve, gli avrebbe fatto professione di amore e di fede nei miei riguardi. [...] Ma poi cosa significano queste dichiarazioni? I giuramenti di fedeltà’ si fanno al Capo: quelli fatti fra camerati hanno un sapore di complotto. E da ciò io rifugio, con ogni energia.

hostile relationship with the British government and closer ties to Germany greatly disturbed his ambassador to the Court of St. James, Count Dino Grandi, as well as Balbo.

On February 3, 1938, Ciano noted that Mussolini saw conflict with Great Britain as inevitable.<sup>304</sup> Therefore, the resignation of the hardliner British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden was cause for great celebration on February 21: “It was in the house of Colonna, during a reception, that I learned last night of Eden’s fall [...] The Prince and Princess of Piedmont were also there and he wanted several times to make a toast with me.”<sup>305</sup> The fact that the Prince of Piedmont wanted to celebrate with Ciano is an indication that the former hoped for *detente* based on an eventual British recognition of the Italian empire.<sup>306</sup> Maria José saw German expansion as a threat to her native Belgium and Umberto, as an active army officer, was well aware that the Italy was in no condition to fight a European war. Still, according to Ciano, Eden’s resignation did not alter Balbo’s astute perception that the tightening relationship between Mussolini and Hitler would bring disaster to Italy, noting on March 12: “Grand Council. Balbo expresses fears for Trieste and criticized the German maneuvers. Naturally he does it stealthily behind the curtains.”<sup>307</sup> With the Easter Accords of April 16, the United Kingdom recognized the Italian conquest of Ethiopia in an attempt to lure Mussolini away from Hitler. Finally, on August 17 of the following summer, Ciano indicated that he did not believe Balbo was plotting against Mussolini.<sup>308</sup>

Mussolini’s domestic popularity waned in 1938 in part due to a short grain harvest which caused the return of pellagra. Economic problems caused by the worldwide depression were

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<sup>304</sup> Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>305</sup>Ibid., pp. 101-102. “E’ stato in casa Colonna, durante un ricevimento, che ho appreso ieri sera la caduta di Eden. [...] C’erano anche i Principi di Piemonte, e lui ha voluto più volte brindare con me.”

<sup>306</sup> Dating back to the turn of the century, the Anglophile Victor Emanuel III had mistrusted Germany.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., p. 111. “Gran Consiglio. Balbo esprime paure per Trieste e critica i procedimenti tedeschi. Naturalmente lo fa dietro le quinte e in sordina.” Then, on March 18: “Alla Camera, col Duce e Starace, abbiamo parlato di Balbo e abbiamo riferito certi suoi atteggiamenti. Il Duce lo odia. Ha detto che gli farà fare la fine di Arpinati.” G. Ciano, *Diario 1937-1943*, p. 114. Leandro Arpinati, had been a squadristi leader in Bologna and vicesecretary of the Fascist Party. He was expelled from the Fascist Party for dissension in 1934 and sent as a political prisoner to the island of Lipari where he remained until 1937.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid., p. 166. Helfand was the Soviet chargé d’affaires in Rome.

exacerbated by autarchy which had been disastrous for the canned food industry in the Naples area as exemplified by the Del Gaizo-Santarsiero company which depended on exports to the United States and had historically been in close contact with the consulate general.<sup>309</sup> Differently, the Cirio company, which had benefitted from its favored status under the Fascist regime, boasted a capital of 61,000,000 lire in 1939. The massive sums invested by the regime for the Spanish war and the modernization of Italian East Africa had created difficulties in state budget. Moreover, fear of being dragged into a major European war by Germany was widespread in Italy as the international system of relations suffered from the *Anschluss* crisis in March.

As previously mentioned, the Prince and Princess of Piedmont had moved to Naples in November 1931 and shortly thereafter settled in at the Villa Maria Pia at Marechiaro. The villa was in the proximity of the Villa Gallotti where Homer Byington Jr. and his wife Jane lived. The U.S. Consulate General in Naples was considered the most important establishment of its kind and the consul general was expected to attend events hosted by Prince Umberto. It is likely that Byington served as an interpreter for Consul General Du Bois at these events.<sup>310</sup> Moreover, the prince, as military governor of the Naples area during the time of the Ethiopian war, supervised military maneuvers and troop departures, and occasionally inspected American warships when they called in the city which would have brought him into contact with Byington who was the consular liaison to American naval officers.<sup>311</sup> Umberto also came to the *Italia* nautical club for ceremonial visits where Homer was a member and regularly attended concerts at the San Carlo Opera House where the Byingtons maintained a box along with their American colleagues. Lastly, Princess Maria José and Jane Byington both frequented the Naples Tennis Club at the Villa Comunale on the Riviera di Chiaia.<sup>312</sup> Homer

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<sup>309</sup> See: M. Acerra, “Gli imprenditori dell’industria conserviera napoletana dalla fine dell’Ottocento alla metà del Novecento”, article part of record of academic conference *Imprenditorialità e sviluppo economico: Il caso italiano* (Secc. XIII-XX) held by the Società Italiana degli Storici Economici, Bocconi University, November 14-15, 2008, p. 107.

<sup>310</sup> For example, Consul General Du Bois attended the Naples baptism of formal baptism of the Princess Maria Pia in December 1934. Du Bois understood and spoke Italian at an intermediate level.

<sup>311</sup> An example was the arrival of light cruiser U.S.S. Raleigh on January 31, 1938.

<sup>312</sup> ADST interview, Jane Byington with Margaret Sullivan, March 8, 1989.

Jr. born in 1908 and Jane (1912) were slightly younger than Umberto (1904) and Maria José (1906).

Princess Maria José “did not share many of the prejudices of her world” and invited the social outcasts the Duke and Duchess of Windsor to the Villa Maria Pia in Naples in July 1938.<sup>313</sup> The Duke of Windsor was previously the British King Edward VIII whose abdication on December 16, 1936, shook the diplomatic world. In 1937 the former king married the twice divorced American commoner Wallis Simpson.<sup>314</sup> The Windsors had gained a reputation as fascist sympathizers and had been exiled from the United Kingdom, although they were still invited to dinner at the British Embassy in Paris by Sir Eric Phipps.<sup>315</sup> Less than a month prior to Edward’s abdication, the Italian Ambassador to London Dino Grandi had reported to Foreign Minister Ciano:

Edward VIII, in private conversation, has never hidden his sentiments of scorn that he feels toward the present government (defined by him as a “government of females”) and toward the increasing impotent decadence of the democratic regime. Betting on a reaction of the British working classes against the latest democratic degenerations of the parliamentary system, King Edward secretly aspires to be the center of this mass movement - and above all of the poor masses - against democracy and labourism. The government’s opposition to his matrimony plans has sharpened these state of mind and has created

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<sup>313</sup> L. Regolo, *La regina incompresa: Tutto il racconto della vita di Maria José di Savoia*, Milan, Simonelli, 2002, p. 159.

<sup>314</sup> At the time Ambassador Phillips kept abreast of the developing situation through Martin Scanlon who had returned to Rome from London; Scanlon had been the Assistant military attaché in Rome from 1924 to 1927. Phillips described the Scanlons as perhaps “the closest American friends of ex-King Edward and Mrs. Simpson.” See: William Phillips Diary, December 16, 1936, Box 6, Folder 7. Scanlon claimed, as is now known, that the conservatives in the British Government were not pleased with Edward’s plan to marry the divorced American commoner Wallis Simpson whereas the king had thought that his popularity with the British people would allow him to convey the title of Duchess of Cornwall upon his wife. Phillips had first met Edward in 1919 when he escorted the latter from Washington D.C. to New York City. See: W. Phillips, *Ventures in Diplomacy*, pp. 94-95. They had met again in August 1927 at Fort Erie, Ontario and again in the fall of 1935 in London when the prince was accompanied Simpson. Ibid.

<sup>315</sup> “Windsors Guests of Honor At British Embassy Dinner”, *New York Times*, May 28, 1938, p. 15. As heir to the throne in the early 1930s Edward had been in close contact with Oswald Mosley, the founder and leader of the British Union of Fascists who would later be interned from 1940 to 1943 as a threat to public security.

open political antagonism between the sovereign and Mr. Baldwin's government.<sup>316</sup>

In short, the notable development of infrastructure under the dictators and their strong anticommunist stance, encouraged the British king in his insistence on a stronger government to enact reforms and restore discipline to British society at a time of economic crisis. He sympathized with Germany where he had spent much of his childhood and spoke German fluently. On October 22, 1937, the Duke and Duchess met infamously with Adolf Hitler.

The Windsors left their Paris area home on July 13, 1938, in order to distance themselves from the official visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth to the French capital scheduled for July 19-22. Given the deteriorating relationship between the House of Savoy and Mussolini, Maria José evidently feared to suffer the same fate as that of the Windsors; Ciano's observation in his diary on July 17 that Mussolini was determined to rid himself of the royal family coincided with the Windsors' Italian vacation. Indeed, the journalist Luciano Regolo notes that Maria José's invitation to the Windsors was followed by the OVRA secret police and generated "furious criticism" in the local aristocracy for having violated the "holiness of royalty."<sup>317</sup>

The Windsors' choice of Italy as a vacation spot in July 1938 was curious.<sup>318</sup> They had no official license to conduct affairs on behalf of the United Kingdom. Still, given the circumstances, and the Duke's enduring ties to Winston Churchill, it is likely that the visit also had an element of political intrigue to it. In the event that Maria José was seriously plotting

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<sup>316</sup> Ddi, Series 8, Volume 5, Grandi to Foreign Minister Ciano, November 27, 1936. Edoardo VIII non ha mai nascosto, nei suoi privati discorsi, i sentimenti di disprezzo che egli prova verso il present governo (da lui definito "governo di femmine") e verso la decadenza sempre più impotente del regime democratico. Calcolando su una reazione delle masse popolari britanniche contro le ultime degenerazioni democratiche del parlamentarismo, Re Edoardo aspira, intimamente, ad essere il centro di questo movimento di masse - e soprattutto di masse povere - contro la democrazia e lo stesso laburismo. L'opposizione del governo ai suoi progetti matrimoniali ha contribuito ad acuire questo stato d'animo e a creare fra la persona del Sovrano e il governo del signor Baldwin un palese antagonismo politico.

<sup>317</sup> L. Regolo, *La regina incompresa: Tutto il racconto della vita di Maria José di Savoia*, Simonelli, Milano, 2002, p. 159.

<sup>318</sup> The month of July 1938 was witness to the Evian Conference on Jewish refugees, continued repression of Jews in Germany and Austria, and Mussolini's pronouncement of the *Manifesto della razza*.

against Mussolini, she would surely have sounded out the reaction of the British and American governments to the latter's elimination. A *Washington Post* society article retrospectively commented on their stay in Naples: "The Windsors went there on their yacht to enjoy speed boating and the new sporting rage that has taken Cannes by storm -- fishing with a gun. Jane Byington was the only woman to catch a fish in this manner."<sup>319</sup> Furthermore, the Byingtons were present at the Villa Gallotti when Baron Gallotti was "frequently host to the Duke and Duchess of Windsor."<sup>320</sup> An *Associated Press* clip carried in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* on July 20 stated: "The Duke and Duchess spent another holiday with friends yesterday. In the evening they dined with Baron Gallotti at his villa, where they chatted with the Princess Maria José di Piemonte and 20 Neapolitan nobles."<sup>321</sup> It is likely that the military spectacle in the Gulf of Naples on the occasion of Hitler's visit the previous May had stoked fears among the Neapolitan nobility, such as Baron Gallotti, of an imminent conflict that would disturb their commercial activities.<sup>322</sup>

It might otherwise seem like a coincidence that the Windsors were guests at the Villa Gallotti while the Byingtons lived there but Jane Byington's mother was a close friend of the

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<sup>319</sup> B. Beale, "Top Hats and Tiaras" *Washington Post*, October 23, 1938, <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/washingtonpost/historical/doc/151020782.html?FMT=ABS&FMTS=ABS:AI&type=historic&date=Oct+23%2C+1938&author=By+Betty+Beale&pub=The+Washington+Post+%281923-1954%29&edition=&startpage=S1&desc=Top+Hats+and+Tiaras>

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> W. Lippman, "Today and Tomorrow Social Activities", *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, July 20, 1938, p. 17. Another possible connection between Baron Gallotti and the Windsors lays in Wallis' second marriage to the American-born British shipping executive Ernest Simpson of Simpson, Spence, and Young who had important commercial interests in Italy. It is likely that Simpson would have known Byington because shipping companies depended upon the consulates.

<sup>322</sup> The Gallotti family made a significant profit from their supply contracts to the Italian Army in the Ethiopian campaign, and wished to recover use of the chalet so the Byingtons moved out in late 1938 and lived at Castello delle Rose in the Vomero section of Naples. See: H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, footnote p. 149. During World War II, many assets of the *Impresa* Gallotti in Africa, such as plants and machines, were requisitioned by the British authorities. On February 25, 1948, Foreign Minister Sforza brought the situation to the attention of his British counterpart Ernest Bevin. It is possible that the situation of the *Impresa* Gallotti in 1948 was brought to made known to Sforza by Byington, then serving as Embassy Counselor in Rome. In the post-World War II period, the chalet at the Villa Gallotti was the official residence of the American Consul General in Naples under Consul Generals Brandt and Nester.

Duchess' aunt, Bessie Merriman, with whom the Duchess kept in contact via letter in 1938.<sup>323</sup> Therefore, despite the difference in age (Jane was born in 1912, the Duchess in 1896), it is highly likely that they had known each other in Baltimore and Washington D.C. society.<sup>324</sup> Furthermore, it is important to remember that in this period the United States did not have a professional intelligence agency operating overseas; as noted by the 1936 inspection report of the Naples Consulate General, each consular officer in the city was expected to consider himself a reporting agent. The Foreign Service officers stationed in Rome and Naples often visited each other for social occasions and exchanged information on Italian war preparations.<sup>325</sup> They were particularly sensitive about protecting American business interests overseas. Jane Byington's mother had been "quite close" for many years to Jim Bell: the founder, chairman, and major shareholder of General Mills Company.<sup>326</sup> Therefore, it hardly seems a coincidence that two weeks after Mussolini boasted of his refusal to buy grain from the "so-called great democracies" on July 4, her husband was meeting with the Windsors and Princess Maria José. As previously noted, the Byington family had first come into contact with the House of Savoy in 1900 on the occasion of King Umberto I's visit to Naples.<sup>327</sup> The liquidation of the Savoy dynasty would have been a further step toward the concentration of all political power in the hands of Mussolini who was refusing to meet with the American ambassador and was clearly leaning toward a military alliance with Germany. Lastly, the July

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<sup>323</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 393.

<sup>324</sup> Simpson first entered into contact with government circles in the 1920s when her first husband, U.S. Navy officer Earl Spencer, was serving in China; she was given intelligence briefings in Washington in order to serve as a letter carrier of secret information.

<sup>325</sup> During his time in Naples Byington continued his friendship with his colleague Theodore Achilles, the heir to the Kodak Eastman fortune, who was responsible for drafting political reports at the embassy in 1934-1935, especially regarding Italy's preparation for the invasion of Ethiopia. See: H.M. Byington, *A Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 23. Both Achilles and Byington would later serve as Chief of the Office of Western European Affairs at the State Department.

<sup>326</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, footnote, p. 75. Bell's son Charles was a classmate of Homer Byington Jr.'s at Yale. State control of the economy was antithetical to the laissez-faire conservative Republicans, who nonetheless had invested in Italy and appreciated Mussolini and Hitler for their friendliness to management and anticommunist approach to labor relations.

<sup>327</sup> The two families had first come into contact when King Umberto I visited Naples in 1900 where he met Homer Byington Sr. at a reception: "This young Italian speaking American fascinated Umberto, and they had a long talk." See: H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 220.

15 declaration of the Defense of the Race (Difesa della razza) against Jews in Italy, exponentially increased the work at the consulate general.<sup>328</sup>

In the lead-up to the Munich Conference, Vice-Consul Fritzlan recalled that the atmosphere in Naples was very unfriendly to Americans and “we could see that war was definitely in the offing [...] while we were not about to get into the war, we made no secret of our feelings in favor of Britain and France.”<sup>329</sup> Of this period Jane Byington recalled that “even the consul general [...] did not see any of the high officials on anything except absolute business.”<sup>330</sup> Still, in this period the diplomatic community in Naples did not face significant hardships. The diplomats, like the American newspapermen in Rome, knew never to talk of sensitive information on the telephone as the device was in most cases tapped by the Fascist police.

It seems likely that Byington served as a trusted channel through which Princess Maria José could communicate to the Roosevelt administration.<sup>331</sup> In this case, Byington took up the role that had been played by Alexander Kirk who had been re-assigned to Moscow in late March 1938. Byington abhorred Hitler’s destabilization of Europe which also alarmed a large share of the Italian Foreign Office. In Naples, Byington reported to Consul General Bowman, who was in daily contact with the embassy. It is important to remember that Ambassador Phillips had known Maria José since his tenure as U.S. Ambassador to Belgium from 1924 to 1927. The crisis between the House of Savoy and Mussolini had been underway since April. Therefore, the structure for a *coup d’état* was almost assuredly in place and active plotting was likely underway. The Italian Army had remained loyal to Victor Emanuel III over Mussolini. Needless to say, a successful execution of this conspiracy would have greatly changed both American and Italian contemporary history and it is evident that even as a young

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<sup>328</sup> C.J. Boyd letter, September 21, 1938, “Introduction to the Mezzogiorno” Association for Diplomatic Training and Studies, available at <http://adst.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Boyd-Clemence-Jandrey.pdf>.

<sup>329</sup> ADST interview A. David Fritzlan with Charles Stuart Kennedy, May 29, 1990.

<sup>330</sup> ADST interview, Jane Byington with Margaret Sullivan, March 8, 1989.

<sup>331</sup> At the time Byington would not have been unknown to Roosevelt: the president’s first cousin, Warren Delano Robbins, had served as executive officer at the Naples Consulate General under Homer Byington Sr. in the period of 1928-1929. In August 1938, a month before the planned coup was scheduled to take place, Ambassador Phillips cancelled his home leave. His friend, Embassy Counselor Alexander Kirk, had enjoyed the closest relations with the House of Savoy from 1928 to March 1938.

consul Byington was never merely a “clerk at the end of a wire”. He was a trusted interlocutor for his sources of information and even in the beginning phase of his career represented both overt and covert aspects of American foreign policy.

On September 26, Mussolini intoned before a rapturous crowd in Verona that “our enemies gathered under the sign of the triangle [...] have recently tried to give concrete form to their pitiful hopes.”<sup>332</sup> He continued: “It is useless that the diplomats tire themselves out by trying to save Versailles”. The Chamber of Deputies had voted on May 19, 1925, to discipline associations based on a proposal by Mussolini with an eye toward banning freemasonry. In his famous speech in Milan on October 18 of the same year, Mussolini declared that the fascist formula meant “everything within the State, nothing outside the State, nothing against the State.” Clearly, freemasonry and fascism were incompatible. It must be remembered that Aaron Homer Byington and Homer Byington Sr. had participated in Masonic lodges. In 1938, Consul Byington certainly would have had connections to clandestine freemason elements even if he was not personally a Mason.<sup>333</sup> Furthermore, he sought to facilitate the reconstruction of the World War I alliance envisioned by the 1935 Stresa Accords. He was aware that after the Corfu incident of 1923, Italy’s foreign policy had not been aggressive until the October 1935 invasion of Ethiopia. This was strongly in contrast to Hitler’s remilitarization of the Rhineland in March 1936, just three years after taking power. Perhaps these considerations throw a different light on Ambassador Phillips’ delivery of a letter from Roosevelt to Mussolini on September 28, the day after the planned *coup d’état* had been slated to take place, which urged the dictator to intervene with Hitler to prevent an aggressive German move against Czechoslovakia.<sup>334</sup> Mussolini’s subsequent role as the man of peace at Munich might also be an acknowledgment of domestic weakness in addition to a realization that Italy was not yet prepared for war.

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<sup>332</sup> “I nostri avversari, coloro ai quali io allusi l’altro giorno davanti alla fremente adunata delle camicie nere di Belluno, i nostri avversari raccolti sotto i segni del triangolo e della falce e martello, avevano in questi ultimi tempi dato corpo alle lore pietosissime speranze. [...] È inutile che i diplomatici si affatichino ancora per salvare Versaglia.”

<sup>333</sup> Homer Byington III indicated that his father was not a freemason in our oral interview in on August 16, 2016.

<sup>334</sup> Phillips writes of the letter in his memoirs: W. Phillips, *Ventures in Diplomacy*, p. 221.

Interestingly, Jane Byington blamed British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden for the strained ties between Italy and the United Kingdom: “If I remember rightly, (Eden) pushed Italy into its eventual pro- German position.”<sup>335</sup> She was likely affected by the omnipresent Italian propaganda in which the British foreign minister was declared Italy’s most important enemy.<sup>336</sup> This conscious attribution of blame to Eden echoes the Duke of Windsor’s strategy of appeasement.<sup>337</sup> In direct contrast to Eden’s hardline position, shortly after taking the throne on January 20, 1936, King Edward VIII came to an agreement with Italian ambassador Dino Grandi to drop sanctions against Italy. In December 1936, Eden sided with Prime Minister Baldwin in forcing Edward to resign if he insisted on marrying Wallis Simpson.

The Duke of Windsor’s overriding objective in his unofficial foreign policy endeavors was to prevent a European war. It is known that the Windsors sought out like-minded people in their travels, yet it is unclear if their relationships with Nazi and Fascist officials, beyond appeasement, also had the objective of seeking the Duke’s restoration to the throne. He clearly considered his exile from England a temporary exercise. After the conclusion of the Munich Conference, he released a statement praising Chamberlain’s conduct of foreign affairs. After the fall of France, Alexander Weddell, the American ambassador in Spain, wrote to State Secretary Hull on July 2, 1940: “In a conversation last night with [member?] of the Embassy staff the Duke of Windsor declared that the most important thing now to be done was to end

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<sup>335</sup> ADST interview, Jane Byington with Margaret Sullivan, March 8, 1989. Eden’s hard line approach was based on his perception that Mussolini was an aggressor whose word meant nothing, and that therefore Italy was a potential enemy in a future war. Eden wanted to maintain British freedom of movement in the Mediterranean and believed that British recognition of Italy’s conquest of Ethiopia would bring no benefit to his own country.

<sup>336</sup> In the oral interview Jane Byington in another criticism of Eden also deliberately referred to the Suez Crisis as a “fiasco”.

<sup>337</sup> Eden’s intransigence toward the Italian invasion of Ethiopia remained in the Duke of Windsor’s mind for many years. According to the *Times of London* correspondent Frank Giles, the Duke continued his criticism of Eden when the latter was Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1955 to 1957, characterizing him as a “bad man, a hopeless man, he helped precipitate the war through his treatment of Mussolini, that’s what he did, he helped to bring on the war....pause.....and of course Roosevelt and the Jews.”

the war before thousands more were killed or maimed to save the faces of a few politicians.”<sup>338</sup> The Duke continued:

In the past 10 years Germany had totally reorganized the order of its society in preparation for this war. Countries which were unwilling to accept such a reorganization of society and its concomitant sacrifices should direct their policies accordingly and thereby avoid dangerous adventures. He stated that this applied not merely to Europe but to the United States also. The Duchess put the same thing somewhat more directly by declaring that France had lost because it was internally diseased and that a country which was not in condition to fight a war should never have declared war.<sup>339</sup>

The Duke declined to mention the decisive role played by the Axis Powers in creating the “dangerous adventures”. Weddell commented: “These observations have their value if any as doubtless reflecting the views of an element in England, possibly a growing one who find in Windsor and his circle a group who are realists in world politics and who hope to come into their own in event of peace.”<sup>340</sup> Well into the 1950s, the Duke “maintained a strict atmosphere of court etiquette” at his home near Paris. Similarly, throughout his career Byington embraced hierarchical relationships as a way of masking his more modest origin.<sup>341</sup> The two men shared anticommunism and a realist approach to foreign policy. For most of the 1930s, dictatorships of the political right were not considered directly antithetical to liberal Western democracies; on the contrary for many diplomats the cause of peace and anticommunism necessitated coexistence between the two forms of government. The Duke hoped that Britain could remain at peace if Germany went to war with the Soviet Union. Similarly, in the years of the Cold War, although Byington blamed Hitler for starting the war, he believed that the United States, in allying with the Soviet Union, had created a greater danger by enabling the Red Army to

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<sup>338</sup> FRUS, 1940, the British Commonwealth of Nations, United Kingdom, p. 41.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid.

<sup>341</sup> See: C. Sulzberger, *A Long Row of Candles: Memories & Diaries 1934-1954*, Toronto, Macmillan, 1969, p. 673. A further confirmation of Byington’s social mores is seen in a letter written by Jeff Graham Parsons on September 21, 1947, who was temporarily lodging in Byington’s villa on the Via Appia Antica while the latter was on home leave: “both of the butlers wear gloves”. Parsons to “Pete” September 21, 1947. J. Graham Parsons papers, Box 1 Folder 6.

arrive in the heart of Europe, an observation that was shared by the fascist diplomat Giuseppe Bastianini.<sup>342</sup>

As per Jane Byington's oral interview, a major European war was seen as imminent in the time leading up to Munich. Therefore, everyone in her social circle in Naples breathed a sigh of relief when conflict was temporarily averted. Still, she dubiously stated that while she and her husband were friends with the younger generation of the large landowners, "we did not know Italian officials. One, we were junior, and two, basically our government policy did not encourage this. While it was not encouraging opposition, neither was it blessing the dictator."<sup>343</sup> She did not mention that it was the major landowners who had fostered the growth of and benefitted from fascism, nor that she had personally known Princess Maria José and the Duke and Duchess of Windsor.

Consul Byington sought a transfer to a Southern European embassy in early 1939.<sup>344</sup> His goal was to reach the prestigious rank of career ambassador but he still had no official embassy experience after seven years in the Foreign Service. His five and a half year permanence in Naples was longer than normal for a young consular officer, which can possibly be explained by his ties to the House of Savoy. His father, though no longer Chief of Personnel, had influential friends in the department and while Byington's fortunes varied over a long career, he was never assigned to what could be considered a hardship post. In late April 1939, Byington reported as third secretary to the U.S. Legation in Belgrade where he quickly became the preferred subordinate of the U.S. Minister Arthur Bliss Lane and earned a promotion to second secretary. Lane also had a wide range of contacts in Italy; from 1917 to

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<sup>342</sup> Information on Byington's opinion from oral interview with Homer M. Byington III. "Nel precedente dopoguerra [...] il bolscevismo veniva considerato come un'infezione delle collettività nazionali e queste reagivano o con l'autorità dello Stato o con le proprie energie se quello si mostrava esitante. [...] stavolta, per contro, Stalin, ribattezzato "Uncle Joe" dalla stupidità di Roosevelt, ha ricevuto dall'America e dall'Inghilterra, dal 1942 al 1945, aiuti concreti in cifre considerevoli." See: G. Bastianini, *Volevo fermare Mussolini: memorie di un diplomatico fascista*, Milan, Rizzoli, 2005, p. 16.

<sup>343</sup>ADST interview, Jane Byington with Margaret Sullivan, March 8, 1989.

<sup>344</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 34. Ironically, the management of diplomatic and consular interchangeability, as created by the Rogers Act of 1924, had been the work of his father Homer Byington Sr.

1919 he had been the private secretary of Ambassador Thomas Nelson Page and was married in Florence in 1919 to Cornelia Baldwin, the daughter of an American doctor who lived in the city.<sup>345</sup> In the period of 1939-1940, Lane shuttled between Belgrade, Florence (to visit family), and Rome to coordinate intelligence with Ambassador Phillips, particularly regarding his attempts to persuade the Anglophile regent Prince Paul against joining the Axis Powers. In Belgrade, Byington became friends with the Florentine Gastone Guidotti, the first secretary of the Italian Legation who authorized Italian passports for Jewish refugees in violation of Foreign Minister Ciano's orders.

On June 8, 1940, two days before the imminent Italian attack on France, Byington traveled to Rome for reasons unknown. On June 30, Lane wrote a letter of condolence for the death of Italo Balbo to an unknown "Giorgio", (possibly the antifascist Giorgio Bassani) lavishing praise upon the aviator for his "courageous and magnificently executed Transatlantic flights, his keen intelligence, his understanding of our problems, and his unforgettable charm of manner."<sup>346</sup> By "his understanding of our problems" Lane alluded to Balbo's role in opposing Italy's alliance with Germany and possibly the aborted September 1938 *coup d'état*.

### **The Milan Consulate**

Another American woman present in Italy at the time of the Munich Conference was Constance Ray Harvey, vice-consul in Milan from August 1931 until November 1938, and one

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<sup>345</sup> "Legation Secretary A.B. Lane to Marry", *New York Times*, May 10, 1918, p. 10.

<sup>346</sup> Arthur Bliss Lane to Giorgio June 30, 1940, ABL Papers, Box 60. It is unclear if this letter was ever mailed.

of the first American women to enter the career Foreign Service.<sup>347</sup> Of her long assignment she recalled that “everyone admitted, even I and the Americans, that there were very good things about fascism, that the country needed to be better organized, and attempts were made to do so.”<sup>348</sup> Particularly interesting as one of the very few female Foreign Service officers, Harvey, who worked long hours at the consulate, perceived no security concerns when returning alone to her apartment late at night. “There was no crime because there was a policeman in his great big, black cloak on practically every street corner.”<sup>349</sup> Still, she didn’t have a feeling of oppression because she perceived that the Milanese were generally positive toward Mussolini. With the passing of time the American consular officials became aware that the Fascist police began to watch their activities in an attempt to identify Italian antifascists. Harvey recalled:

Then after the beginning of the Ethiopian war, the government sent out into the various towns and cities, young Italian women who were, of course, devoted Italian fascists, all for the new regime, and they became sort of informal spies at cocktail parties. We began to realize what was going on. Then it became rather apparent, because the government couldn't reimburse these young women, they couldn't pay them because they were all from noble families and it would have been insulting. They had to do something to show their appreciation, so each one was gradually issued by the government a lovely new leopard-skin coat which came from Ethiopia. In no time at all, we realized what our spotted friends were up to.<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>347</sup> Born in Buffalo, New York in 1904, Harvey’s ancestors had emigrated from Somerset, England to Massachusetts in 1630. Her parents were intellectuals who invested in Harvey’s education by sending her to the elite private Franklin School where she studied Greek and Latin. Then, in order to have a more “democratic” upbringing, her parents decided that she should attend the local public high school for two years. After Harvey graduated from high school she traveled to Europe with her parents; in fact they were in Florence in the autumn of 1923 when Mussolini entered the city for the first time as Prime Minister: “What I remembered was that the crowds in the street were cowed and silent as he stood up in his open car in the procession. They acted afraid of him, quite different from their subsequent admiration.”. See: ADST interview, Constance Ray Harvey with Dr. Milton Colvin, July 11, 1988. Harvey was a 1927 graduate of Smith College.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid. The Milan Consulate was managed by Consul Homer Brett from 1928-1934: a veteran of the Spanish-American War, Consul General George K. Donald from 1934-1936, and Consul General Walter H. Sholes from 1936-1940.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid.

Interestingly, Harvey recalled that the nobility, even at the provincial level, had reservations about Mussolini whereas the vast majority of the country “felt that he had been doing great things for them. They didn't yet realize what was really beginning to occur. There was, of course, a great devotion to the House of Savoy, and they still had a lot of influence.”<sup>351</sup> She observed that the Ethiopian war was fairly popular in Milan, and “they could have gotten away with it.”<sup>352</sup> Like Jane Byington, she believed that Italy's involvement in the Spanish Civil War was the key turning point that led to Mussolini's demise. The war was not well-received by the local population which resented Italy's deepening military ties with Germany because a major European war seemed imminent. International developments were intertwined with widespread economic suffering: by 1938 pellagra had returned throughout Northern Italy: a development in stark contrast to the first years of fascism when the economic situation had greatly improved in Lombardy.<sup>353</sup>

## **2.2 The Rome Embassy and the Declaration of War**

After the German invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, Ambassador Phillips believed that Italy would remain neutral until the meeting between Hitler and Mussolini at the Brenner Pass on March 18, 1940.<sup>354</sup> On May 14, Secretary of State Cordell Hull notified the American public that Phillips had advised the 19,561 U.S. citizens residing in Italy to leave the country while communications were still open.<sup>355</sup> Later that month Alexander Kirk returned briefly to Rome ostensibly for personal reasons, although he met with Phillips in what was probably a

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<sup>351</sup> Ibid.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid.

<sup>354</sup> W. Phillips, *Ventures in Diplomacy*, pp. 296-297.

<sup>355</sup> “Americans in Italy Warned”, *The Sedalia Democrat*, Sedalia, Missouri, May 14, 1940, p. 1. (19561 American citizens resided in Italy as of January 1, 1940)

list ditch attempt to dissuade Mussolini from bringing Italy into the European conflict.<sup>356</sup> Italy invaded France on June 10; later that same day President Roosevelt solemnly declared: “the hand that held the dagger has struck it into the back of its neighbor.” Still, Arthur Bliss Lane, U.S. Minister to Yugoslavia, found little enthusiasm for the war in his travels to Florence and Rome in July and described a “feeling of apathy bordering on disgust regarding the war. When it is found that the war is not going to end over night and that it is going to cost Italy not only a further lowered standard of living but severe physical hardships as well, the unpopularity of the war will, in my opinion, be aggravated.”<sup>357</sup>

On a visit to the United States in August 1940, Kirk remained “deeply impressed in my talks with some of those with whom I came in contact by their misconception and, indeed, ignorance of the relations of our national life to the struggles which are now going on in Europe and elsewhere and in which I am profoundly convinced our own vital interests are immediately involved.”<sup>358</sup> In a letter dated September 1, he asked Roosevelt to accept his resignation from Berlin so that he could return to the United States to share his experiences in Rome, Moscow, and Berlin with the American public; around the same time the United States and the United Kingdom concluded the Destroyers for Bases Agreement. Roosevelt refused the resignation and Kirk was reassigned to Rome in early December with the rank of minister plenipotentiary in the absence of his friend Ambassador Phillips.

On December 23, Kirk wrote a letter to his former superior, Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long, which indicated that upon his return to Rome he had been received warmly by the members of the Italian Foreign Office including Ciano and other old friends

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<sup>356</sup> Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles has previously visited Mussolini in February and March 1940 but was unsuccessful in modifying the Italian Prime Minister’s decision to enter the war at the opportune moment.

<sup>357</sup> Arthur Bliss Lane to Mr. Reeve Schley, August 6, 1940, ABL Papers, Box 66. Despite the war, Lane maintained his close relationship to Agostino Guerrini Maraldi, the Italian Consul General in Ljubljana. After the Italian entry into the war, Maraldi asked Lane to use the American diplomatic pouch to send personal mail. The latter was forced to refuse as he had received a directive from Washington on June 20 forbidding this practice due to the “uncertain conditions now prevailing.” See Lane to Maraldi, June 22, 1940, ABL Papers, Box 66.

<sup>358</sup> Kirk to Roosevelt, September 1, 1940, BLP, General Correspondence (1903-1947), Box 132.

“who accepted him on the basis of past relationships.”<sup>359</sup> He noted that great expectations had been built up in Roman society in anticipation of the work he might do in Italy regarding the war. The December return of Phillips squashed Kirk’s brief opportunity for individual initiative; as embassy counselor the latter could not afford the risk of running contrary to the ambassador’s desires. In the end, Kirk was “desperately sorry for I saw a real chance to do something, if anything could be done.”<sup>360</sup> Despite the war, he continued his social functions as a representative of a neutral nation until he was assigned as U.S. Ambassador to Egypt on February 11, 1941.

Owing to military necessity, the Italian government closed the U.S. Consulate General in Naples on February 28, 1941, and Consul General Bowman moved up to Rome to run the embassy’s consular section<sup>361</sup> Shortly thereafter, on March 11, Congress approved the Lend-Lease Act which began the American distribution of food, oil, and war materials to Britain. As relations continued to deteriorate between the United States and Germany, Hitler pressured Mussolini to take a harder line against the United States. The remaining American consulates in Italy (as well as the Italian consulates in the United States) were closed in late June 1941. The embassy continued to represent British and French interests in Italy but Phillips sought to conclude his unsuccessful mission and left his post on October 6. His wife Caroline had previously returned to the United States in June and commented on the situation: “The press there is very antagonistic to America, but the people were very courteous. [...] I don’t think the Italian people like the war. I believe that their hatred was so strong against Germany that they couldn’t hate anybody else.”<sup>362</sup> In early August 1941 when asked of the Italian population’s attitude to the war Bowman sarcastically responded: “The results of their attempt at war couldn’t make them very eager for it.”<sup>363</sup>

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<sup>359</sup> Kirk to Long, December 23, 1940, BLP, General Correspondence (1903-1947), Box 132.

<sup>360</sup> Ibid.

<sup>361</sup> J.E. Miller, “Dilettanti e professionisti: talento e fortuna nella diplomazia americana a Napoli”, p. 69.

<sup>362</sup> “Wife of American Envoy Arrives on Exeter”, *New York Times*, June 25, 1941, p. 12.

<sup>363</sup> “Liner Docks With Consuls; Conditions in Germany Told”, *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, August 2, 1941, p. 1.

Elbridge Durbrow, who had returned to Rome as embassy second secretary in November 1940, recalled: “We knew it was going to come. We could feel it. We didn’t know Pearl Harbor was going to happen, but we were preparing for it.”<sup>364</sup> His colleague, Third Secretary Merritt Cootes, recounted that he and Durbrow traveled to Frascati to gather intelligence on December 7, 1941.<sup>365</sup> Accompanied by two wives of embassy officers to complete the appearance of a picnic, they scouted the location of a proposed Luftwaffe base to be built due to German dissatisfaction with Italian Air Force operations in the Mediterranean. Upon their return to Rome, Chargé d’Affaires George Wadsworth, who had taken over in Phillips’ absence, informed them of the attack on Pearl Harbor.<sup>366</sup> Therefore, the two secretaries were unable to file their secret report as it would have subsequently had to pass through the Italian Foreign Ministry. Durbrow accompanied Wadsworth to Palazzo Venezia on December 11 where Foreign Minister Ciano presented the Italian declaration of war on the United States. Immediately after the meeting, Durbrow and Wadsworth met with the former’s close friend, Rolando Dalla Rosa Prati di Collechio of the Italian Foreign Office who had an American wife.<sup>367</sup> According to Durbrow, Dalla Rosa lamented “Mr. Wadsworth, sad thing, I don’t like it any more than you do but you know these things do happen, but we’re going to get you all out of here as soon as we possibly can [...] do you think it would be all right with your government if Durbrow kept up coming down here every day, working out the return arrangements?”<sup>368</sup>

Despite the declaration of war, American and Italian officials remained optimistic regarding future bilateral relations. Upon Ambassador Prince Ascanio Colonna di Paliano’s return to

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<sup>364</sup> Elbridge Durbrow interview with John T. Mason Jr., May 5, 1981, Columbia University.

<sup>365</sup> ADST interview, Merritt N. Cootes with Lillian Peters Mullin, September 27, 1991.

<sup>366</sup> Wadsworth was a specialist on the Middle East who had followed a unique career path. After graduating in engineering from Union College in Schenectady, New York, he worked for 3 years at the American University in Beirut and also as a part-time employee at the U.S. consulate in the city before joining the Consular service full-time in 1917. Before his transfer to Rome, he served as U.S. Consul General in Jerusalem from 1935 to 1940.

<sup>367</sup> Durbrow and Dalla Rosa first met in California; the latter was Italian Consul in Los Angeles in 1932.

<sup>368</sup> Elbridge Durbrow interview with John T. Mason Jr., May 5, 1981, Columbia University.

Italy he asserted that in America there was “no extended resentment against Italy as compared with the resentment against Germany and Japan.”<sup>369</sup> Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long had notified Colonna that the “Americans had no quarrel with the Italian people, only with their dictator.”<sup>370</sup> On a similar note, the Italian Foreign Office expected the evacuation of embassy personnel and other American citizens to occur within two or three weeks via exchange with the Italian Embassy in Washington. Unexpectedly, the evacuation of Americans lasted six months due to the German desire to retrieve all of their agents in Latin America. In a telling sign of Italian frustration with Germany, Dalla Rosa remarked to Durbrow: “Those damned Germans. God, I hate them. I know you want to go home. You haven’t seen your son and your family.”<sup>371</sup> Durbrow was impressed by the professional courtesy extended on his daily visits to the foreign office.<sup>372</sup>

After Pearl Harbor, the American newspaper correspondents in Italy were sent to Siena whereas the handful of remaining diplomats were confined to the city limits of Rome. Although the embassy officers were under guard day and night they enjoyed visits to the Roman Forum and Sistine Chapel and publicly socialized with colleagues in the evening. Furthermore, they were allowed to keep their cars, chauffeurs, servants and the embassy commissary remained open providing them with “rations four times that of the ordinary ration cards an Italian had [...] 30 gallons of gasoline a month.”<sup>373</sup> In short, the treatment reserved for Americans in Italy was remarkably different from that experienced by the American newspaper correspondents in Japan after Pearl Harbor. “From the 26 who were interned in

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<sup>369</sup> E. Di Nolfo, “Italia e Stati Uniti: Un’alleanza diseguale” *Storia delle relazioni internazionali* a. VI, n.1, 1990, pg. 3.

<sup>370</sup> A. Brogi, *A Question of Self-Esteem: The United States and the Cold War Choices in France and Italy, 1944-1958*, Westport, CT, Praeger, 2002, p. 20.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid.

<sup>372</sup> Durbrow also handled the negotiations for the evacuation of Brazilians and representatives of other Latin American countries which the Axis had declared war on. He became Counselor of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow in the first years of the Cold War (1946-1948) and was known as one of the leading experts on the Soviet Union in the State Department along with George Kennan and Charles Bohlen. In 1950, Durbrow rose to become the head of Foreign Service Personnel in Washington. He returned to Italy in 1952 as Deputy Chief of Mission in Rome.

<sup>373</sup> Ibid.

Japan came tales of great personal hardship, torture, beatings and worse. John B. Powell, the *Chicago Tribune* correspondent, came back crippled from his confinement in freezing prisons, injuries that were to prove fatal.”<sup>374</sup> An important factor in the “transnational fraternity of career diplomats” was that the head of the ceremonial department of the Italian Foreign Office, Baron Andrea Celesia di Vegliasco, had been secretary of the Italian embassy in Washington during the First World War, and soon thereafter had married the wealthy American Margaret Erhardt at her family’s 5th Avenue home.<sup>375</sup>

The above-mentioned Third Secretary Merritt Cootes had developed close ties to members of the Roman aristocracy. Prior to his May 1942 evacuation he was invited to a party organized by the Countess Giuliana Senni and Marchesa Simonetta Colonna di Cesarò.<sup>376</sup> He attended the celebration accompanied by his guards who reported the presence of the noble women to the police. Colonna di Cesarò and Senni were sentenced to a concentration camp though this punishment was later lightened. The others, charged with attending an antifascist reception, were released after a short imprisonment and a severe warning regarding their future behavior. According to the *New York Times*, “The charge was made in fascist circles that the aristocracy in Rome, Naples, Turin, Florence and Milan, which at one time was ostentatiously Fascist, had now become anti-German, ‘defeatist’ and critical even of Signor Mussolini.”<sup>377</sup>

After concluding his mission in Rome, William Phillips became the head of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in London. During the war, elements of the Roman aristocracy aided the OSS’s intelligence gathering operations. The Franchetti family from whom Phillips had rented a summer home in Castel Gardena was another example of the union between the class of large Italian landowners and American industrial wealth; Baron Mario Franchetti, the son of

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<sup>374</sup> J.Hohenberg, *Foreign Correspondents: The Great Reports and Their Times*, Second Edition, Syracuse University Press, 1995, p. 216.

<sup>375</sup> “Italian Diplomat Weds Ms. Erhardt”, *New York Times*, December 7, 1919, p. 22.

<sup>376</sup> Among those present were the Marchesa Simonetta Colonna di Cesarò , Contessa Giuliana Senni, Marchese Pier Ranieri Bourbon del Monte, Barone Orazio Sanjust di Teulada, Conte Raffaele Larussa, Conte Pietro Antonelli and Guido Branca, a commoner and industrialist.“Arrest of Nobles in Italy Reported”, *New York Times*, May 31, 1942, p. 3.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid.

Carlo, married the American Anne Milliken: heiress of the major textile manufacturer Milliken & Company at the Villa Senni in Grottaferrata on July 11, 1945.<sup>378</sup> Milliken, who was a niece of Countess Senni, (Mary Gayley of Philadelphia who had married Count Giulio Senni of the foreign office) was an OSS operative in Rome during the war and was likely recruited by Phillips. Another niece of Countess Senni, Julia Montgomery, served 18 months in the OSS during the war.

Another example of the separate identity which superseded the temporary condition of war is seen in a letter from the Italian diplomat Luca Dainelli to the art historian Bernard Berenson on June 25, 1942. Berenson, a Lithuanian-born naturalized American had lived in Florence for many years prior to World War II. Dainelli wrote: "I really intended to bring these letters to you myself, but due to the present circumstances I believe it is better for me not to come to the 'Tatti'. As I want you to understand that the war hasn't in the least changed by sentiments of friendship for both you and Mrs. Berenson. Until better times come to all of us, I wish you to count on me if anything for which you think I may be of some use."<sup>379</sup>

Many Italian diplomats were well aware of the United States' vast industrial capacity and dreaded the idea of Italy entering World War II on the side of Germany because they knew it would bring the United States closer to the British. The eventual cleavage in the Italian Foreign Office and the surrounding Roman aristocracy between Anglophile elements and those who supported the war had major consequences. In fact, it was the Italian diplomats with exposure to British and American society, such as Dino Grandi, Leonardo Vitetti, Giuseppe Bastianini, as well as former Foreign Minister Ciano who challenged Mussolini in the Fascist Grand Council on July 25, 1943.

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<sup>378</sup> "Ms. Milliken Wed to Rome Nobleman", *New York Times*, July 19, 1945, p. 26.

<sup>379</sup> Bernard Berenson Papers, Luca Dainelli to Bernard Berenson on June 25, 1942.

### 2.3 Roosevelt and the Foreign Service During World War II

Back in Washington D.C., President Roosevelt regularly exchanged telegraphs with Churchill and Stalin. After the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, the president “foresaw a situation in which Great Britain and the Soviet Union would be the only important powers in Europe.”<sup>380</sup> For delicate negotiations he sent trusted personal emissaries to speak on his behalf, a practice that was tolerated by the career diplomats who put aside their partisan differences in wartime.<sup>381</sup> After Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt interrupted the recruitment of new Foreign Service officers because he did not want the State Department to compete for manpower with the military. Evidently, he still did not consider the Foreign Service an important element of foreign policy. During the war, the service suffered a shortage of qualified personnel due to the resignation of many officers who chose to enlist in the armed forces. As a result, the State Department was forced to ask older diplomats to postpone their retirement. At times, after the establishment of the Office of Strategic Services in 1942, the diplomats who remained in the department were upstaged by intelligence agents whom they considered inadequately prepared due to a lack of overseas experience.<sup>382</sup>

Prior to Pearl Harbor, many Foreign Service officers serving in countries occupied by Nazi Germany were transferred to administrative positions in Washington D.C. Such was the case for Homer M. Byington Jr. who left Belgrade for Washington on April 4, 1941: two days before the Axis powers attacked Yugoslavia. Soon thereafter Byington became the Deputy Director of the State Department’s Division of Current Information. In this position he worked on a daily basis with Secretary of State Hull and his successor Edward Stettinius, essentially serving as the former’s press officer, a role that had formerly belonged to James Dunn. Although Byington would much rather have been assigned to one of the department’s geographic desks, he was one of very few diplomats to have a permanent pass to the White

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<sup>380</sup> J.L. Harper *American Visions of Europe: Franklin D. Roosevelt, George F. Kennan, and Dean G. Acheson*, Cambridge University Press, 1996. pp. 80-81.

<sup>381</sup> Two of Roosevelt’s personal envoys were Averell Harriman, U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union from 1943 to 1946 and Myron Taylor, U.S. Representative to the Vatican from 1940 to 1950.

<sup>382</sup> The OSS was overseen by the newly founded Joint Chiefs of Staff.

House.<sup>383</sup> In April 1945, he served as the principal press officer of the American delegation at the San Francisco Conference where he became acquainted with Nelson Rockefeller and collaborated with Dunn who managed the conference for Secretary of State Stettinius.<sup>384</sup>

In the autumn of 1941, Jane Byington was recruited to the Office of the Coordinator of Information (COI) by its founder William Donovan at a Washington D.C. cocktail party.<sup>385</sup> (The COI was renamed the Office of Strategic Services in 1942.) She became one of the OSS's first employees in 1942 and, after earning several promotions, headed a counterintelligence section in Washington which dealt with Italian and Balkan affairs. "She had known personally and worked with many of the key people in the U.S. 'intelligence establishment' who later became well known for their involvement in the country's wartime intelligence activities."<sup>386</sup> Jane and Homer Byington served as an important conduit in wartime Washington by passing information to each other that their two respective employers (OSS and State Department) were reluctant to share due to bureaucratic competition.<sup>387</sup> Jane returned to civilian life in the spring of 1945 to accompany Homer to the San Francisco Conference.

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<sup>383</sup> In this period Byington established a long-lasting friendship with Thomas Blake, an assistant to President Roosevelt's press secretary who was likely responsible for Byington having the White House pass. See: H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 32. In the postwar period Blake worked as a lobbyist for ITT with the objective of rehabilitating the corporation's reputation which had been sullied by the close ties between its founder Sosthenes Behn and Nazi officials such as Hermann Göring. See: A. Sampson, *The Sovereign State of ITT*, pp. 31-39.

<sup>384</sup> A *New York Times* article from April 27, 1945 shows Byington as a mediator between the State Department and the press at the San Francisco Conference. Still, he cautioned: "We cannot establish the rules by ourselves. Since this is an international conference, the delegations themselves must approve the rules." See: "Action Pondered on Press Freedom", *New York Times*, April 27, 1945, p. 15.

<sup>385</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 159. According to *The Sum of Perishable Things* Donovan had traveled to Belgrade in the autumn of 1940 where he met with Minister Arthur Bliss Lane and worked to delay the German invasion of the Balkans.

<sup>386</sup> H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 159.

<sup>387</sup> In an oral interview Homer M. Byington III stated that the OSS, through an Italian double agent, recovered a list produced by the Italian government of potential American spies on which Homer's name appeared. Homer Byington Jr.'s name was on the list, but he was not a spy.

## Changes at the Top

Under the wartime emergency conditions Roosevelt ran for an unprecedented fourth term in 1944 even though he was suffering from acute hypertension, bronchitis and a compromised heart valve. With his attention primarily focused on the war, for domestic administration the president depended heavily upon the South Carolinian James F. Byrnes to the point that the latter became known as the “assistant president” in the press.<sup>388</sup> In fact, as Director of the Office of War Management (OWM) beginning in May 1943, Byrnes had explicit authority over all civilian manpower policy decisions related to the war and mobilized the American economy to achieve victory.<sup>389</sup> Still, at the Democratic Convention of July 1944 in Chicago, Roosevelt gave his all-important backing for the position of vice-president to Harry S. Truman, the unheralded junior senator from Missouri. Byrnes fumed over this act of perceived political betrayal.

In 1944, Roosevelt presided over the massive transfer of economic power and influence from Europe to the United States but remained determined to avoid a prolonged military occupation of France and Italy and resisted British demands for a long-lasting American presence in Europe.<sup>390</sup> Secretary of State Hull resigned for health reasons in November, concluding a tenure of nearly 12 years. The outgoing secretary recommended Byrnes as his successor to FDR but the latter preferred Edward R. Stettinus Jr., Under Secretary of State and former President of U.S. Steel who had scant experience in foreign affairs.<sup>391</sup> Evidently, the president feared that the ambitious Byrnes would have forgotten who was in charge given the

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<sup>388</sup> The friendship between Byrnes and Roosevelt dated back to 1932 when the South Carolina senator helped sway his state’s delegation in favor of Roosevelt at the Democratic Convention of July 1932. Byrnes then introduced the Democratic candidate to his friend, the wealthy Democratic backer Bernard Baruch. Byrnes possessed an immense amount of legislative experience which bolstered his reputation as the leading expert on the art of compromise in the U.S. Senate. The president had previously nominated Byrnes to serve as a Supreme Court Justice where he remained until the December 7, 1941 attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor. See: D. Robertson, *Sly and Able: A Political Biography of James F. Byrnes*, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 1994, pp. 138-141.

<sup>389</sup> See: A. Gropman, *The Big ‘L’: American Logistics in World War II*, Washington D.C., National Defense University Press, 1997, p. 48.

<sup>390</sup> J. L. Harper, *Visions of Europe* p. 99.

<sup>391</sup> G.H. Stuart, *The Department of State*, p. 414.

independence in diplomatic relations afforded to the position.<sup>392</sup> Looking to mend fences, Roosevelt invited Byrnes to the February 1945 Yalta Conference where the former hoped that the victorious Allies could find a peaceful geopolitical equilibrium as the Red Army would soon be in Berlin. Roosevelt died on April 12, just six weeks after returning from Yalta.

While the career diplomats had long deemed Secretary Hull overly subservient to the president, the choice of Stettinius badly damaged their morale as they interpreted the Roosevelt's choice as another indication that he did not value their input. The U.S. Ambassador to Poland Arthur Bliss Lane, a career diplomat, wrote: "The sentiment in the Department of State at the time was that President Roosevelt, on the advice of Mr. Harry Hopkins, had nominated Mr. Stettinius during this critical period of our international relations so that the president and Mr. Hopkins would have had the complete personal control of our foreign policy, above all regarding the Soviet Union."<sup>393</sup> Still, Stettinius' tenure saw the confirmation of career diplomats as masters of foreign affairs in the State Department: Joseph Grew was confirmed as Under Secretary of State on December 19, 1944, and the following day James Dunn became Assistant Secretary of State.<sup>394</sup> Grew administered the State Department when Stettinius was away for the June 1945 San Francisco Conference, which was largely managed by Dunn.

Unlike Roosevelt, President Truman did not seek to make foreign policy from the White House but he did share his predecessor's suspicions of the professional diplomats who he derisively labeled as the "smart boys in the State Department", thus subscribing to the social construct of the diplomats as pedantic and elitist. In short, Truman did not believe that the

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<sup>392</sup> D. Robertson, *Sly and Able: A Political Biography of James F. Byrnes*, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 1994, p. 379.

<sup>393</sup> A.B. Lane, *I Saw Poland Betrayed*, Indianapolis, Bobby Merrill, 1948, p. 48. As noted by Plischke: "Roosevelt intended to be his own Secretary of State and believed that he could depend on Stettinius to execute his orders without friction." E. Plischke, *U.S. Department of State: A Reference History*, Westport, CT, Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999, p. 277.

<sup>394</sup> The brief tenure of Stettinius is remembered for his December 1944 reform of the State Department. "Stettinius concentrated on key deficiencies of the Department, particularly the poor division of responsibility for important functions, inadequate means of obtaining and disseminating information, and ineffective long-range planning." See: "Embarrassment Brings Change", Office of the Historian, <https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/short-history/embarrassment>

career Foreign Service officers at the ambassadorial level were best able to interpret the national interest. In July 1945, just three months after taking office, Truman removed Stettinius in favor of Byrnes. Like the president, Byrnes was a pragmatic democrat who had supported New Deal legislation during his time in the Senate. He was also one of the few senior government officials who had taken copious notes of the negotiations at Yalta, had many friends in Congress (a crucial element for the ratification of peace treaties) and was more qualified than Stettinius to accede to the Oval Office if necessary.<sup>395</sup> Beyond the looming decision of the use of the atomic bomb and the eventual Japanese terms of surrender, Byrnes hoped to establish a peaceful post-war order stemming from the wartime cooperation between the Roosevelt administration and the Soviet Union. The incoming secretary stated: “I know how to deal with the Russians. It’s just like the U.S. Senate. You build a post office in their state and they’ll build a post office in our state.”<sup>396</sup> In short, Byrnes’ prowess as Congress’ most adroit dealmaker convinced him that he could obtain Stalin’s cooperation in forging the post-war peace treaties.

World War II changed the composition of the Foreign Service. Truman’s decision to terminate OSS in September 1945 resulted in the lateral entry of new officers that were viewed with suspicion by the old guard. The Foreign Service had 3,730 total employees in 1939 but by the spring of 1945 there were 7000; in 1941 Congress had created a pool of reservists which was largely composed of economic experts who had served in the private sector.<sup>397</sup> After the war ended many of the reservists entered the career service, constituting a threat to the long-standing predominance of the Europeanists. In January 1946, the 976 reservists outnumbered the 820 career diplomats.<sup>398</sup>

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<sup>395</sup> At the time the Secretary of State was second-in-line to the vice-president due to the Presidential Succession Act of 1886. Since Truman had no vice-president, in the event that he died or became incapacitated, Stettinius, who did not have much experience in government, would have become president.

<sup>396</sup> D. Robertson, *Sly and Able*, p. 446.

<sup>397</sup> G.H. Stuart, *The Department of State: A History of its Organization, Procedure, and Personnel*, New York, MacMillan, 1949, p. 414.

<sup>398</sup> H. Kopp, “Foreign Service, Civil Service: How We Got to Where We Are”, *Foreign Service Journal*, Volume 91 n.5, May 2014, p. 21.

## 2.4 Relations Renewed

Representative of the United Nations, the Allied Control Commission (ACC) was an organization created as part of the long armistice terms of September 29, 1943 between the Allies and Italy. The ACC was charged with overseeing and regulating the armistice regime on Italian territory. Shortly thereafter, on October 13, the governments of the United States, United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union released a joint statement to accept Italy's co-belligerent status. Diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Italy and both the United States and United Kingdom resumed under the armistice regime in 1944. Despite the equality of both wartime Allies in the military occupation of Italy, for the most part the American authorities played a secondary role to their British counterparts while the war continued. This state of affairs irritated the former who brought their grievances to the attention of the Roosevelt administration. In light of numerous complaints over the perceived domineering behavior by the British, James Dunn in Washington wrote to General Eisenhower's American political advisor in Caserta, Robert Murphy, on May 22, 1944.<sup>399</sup>

If the attitude and practices of British officers continue as reported, it will of course be necessary for this Government to reconsider its whole position in the Peninsula as the Americans are not very good "junior partners." [...] We realize fully that the British have a more intimate relations with the whole Italian situation and may have more specific and more definite lines of policy than we have, ours being rather more general. But we are not very happy about any procedure which has a tendency of excluding us from consideration of policies and actions in Italy, particularly as we are still there on a cooperative basis with the British, and as we are still, and probably will be for some time, rather important in the matter of supplies for that country.<sup>400</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> See: D. Ellwood, *L'alleato nemico: la politica dell'occupazione anglo-americana in Italia, 1943-1946*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1977, for an analysis of the differences in opinion between the British and Americans regarding the unseating of the Badoglio government by the six antifascist parties, the formation of the Bonomi government, and the controversy caused by the British veto of the Count Carlo Sforza as Minister of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>400</sup> Dunn to Murphy, May 22, 1944, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 96. Murphy had entered the Consular Service in 1921 and was an expert on French affairs.

While the British played a more significant role in the administration of the liberated regions of Italy, the Californian Ellery W. Stone (1894-1981) eventually became a dominant presence in the armistice regime. An expert in telecommunications, Stone had been the president of the Federal Telegraph Corporation in the 1920s. In 1943, he left his position at the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation (ITT) to return to active service in the U.S. Navy with the rank of captain.<sup>401</sup> In July 1944, Stone took General McFarland's place as President of the ACC (later renamed Allied Commission) after the latter was sacked by Prime Minister Churchill. He thus became the second most powerful Allied representative (after the Supreme Allied Commander in Caserta) in liberated Italy. Stone later recalled: "I had six two-starred generals, admirals, Air Force, and thirteen one-starred people reporting to me and I was only an equivalent to colonel in the Army, since I was captain in the Navy. So first the British recommended that I'd be promoted."<sup>402</sup>

Stone was not well-versed in, nor did he particularly care for, diplomatic sensibilities. Years later he did not hesitate to express his resentment for the State Department's interference in military operations at the end of the war in Europe and attributed the British failure to capture Trieste to the State Department and British Foreign Office's fear of upsetting Marshal Tito.<sup>403</sup> It is important to note that Stone's previous and future employer, the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation (ITT), was generally favorable to dictators because they provided political stability.<sup>404</sup>

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<sup>401</sup> D.W. Dunlap, "Ellery Stone, 87, I.T.T. Official, Dies", *New York Times*, September 20, 1981.

<sup>402</sup> Ellery W. Stone interview with Frank A. Polkinghorn on April 24, 1974, [http://ethw.org/Oral-History:Ellery\\_W\\_Stone](http://ethw.org/Oral-History:Ellery_W_Stone) Accessed January 25, 2016.

<sup>403</sup> Ellery W. Stone interview with Frank A. Polkinghorn on April 24, 1974, [http://ethw.org/Oral-History:Ellery\\_W\\_Stone](http://ethw.org/Oral-History:Ellery_W_Stone) Accessed January 25, 2016.

<sup>404</sup> See: A. Sampson, *The Sovereign State of ITT*, New York, Stein and Day, 1973.

American diplomatic representation in post-war Italy demonstrated a notable level of continuity with that of the 1930s.<sup>405</sup> Still, the predominance of the ACC, led by Admiral Stone ensured that the professional diplomats of the State Department remained in the background as they had throughout the war.<sup>406</sup> Reporting on the political developments in liberated Italy was carried out by military authorities. On July 1, 1944, the Naples Consulate General reopened to the public. Three days later, to reassert the Foreign Service's role, Assistant Secretary of State Howland Shaw circulated a memorandum through Rome in which he cited the Reorganization Act of 1939, namely that "the Foreign Service is responsible for the performance of general reporting services for all department and agencies of the Government."<sup>407</sup> The memorandum demonstrates the confusion of overlapping areas of responsibility between the various war time agencies, in particular the Foreign Economic Administration and the Foreign Service.

On August 11, Foreign Service officer Samuel Reber, then stationed in Caserta, wrote to his friend Alexander Kirk who, along with his British counterpart Sir Noel Charles, served as representatives on the Allied Advisory Council: a consultative organ designed to assist the ACC. Reber explained that the hesitation from the State Department in letting Kirk assume control of the political aspects of the ACC was

out of fear lest our Soviet friends would see the possibility of securing another political job for one of their boys and thereby assert themselves into the control of ACC. [...] It is anticipated however that the new Chief Commissioner or Ellery if he remains will receive private

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<sup>405</sup> Foreign Service officers who worked in Italy both before and after World War II were: David McKendree Key II, Merritt Cootes, George Brandt, Lester Schnare, Walter Orebaugh, Charles A. Bay, Homer Byington Jr, Elbridge Durbrow, Outerbridge Horsey, John Wesley Jones, Frederick Jandrey, Samuel Reber, and Alexander Kirk. The career diplomat Frederick Reinhardt, U.S. Ambassador to Italy from 1961 to 1968, had received a diploma from the Cesare Alfieri Institute in Florence in 1937 but was not in a diplomatic capacity.

<sup>406</sup> The Allied Control Commission was later renamed the Allied Commission (AC).

<sup>407</sup> Shaw Memo to Rome Embassy, July 4, 1944, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 97. Shaw was a career Foreign Service officer.

instructions directing him to consult with you two and to keep you fully informed of all aspects of the Commission's work.<sup>408</sup>

This fear was confirmed in an August 23 letter from the Supreme Allied Commander in Caserta, Field Marshal Henry Maitland Wilson, to Chief Commissioner Stone. Wilson reiterated his desire to empower the government of Ivanoe Bonomi, but reminded Stone that only the ACC should enter into direct relations with the prime minister, whereas the delegations of the Advisory Council could make representations only to their own respective governments. Again, the key consideration was that the Soviet Union was represented in the Advisory Council but not in the ACC. Still, Wilson observed that the "Control Commission should progressively be relieved of at least three-fourth's of its duties [...] The present situation should in any case be unfrozen. It is impossible to be long, and without serious dangers, administered by two Governments. Similarly, it is impossible for a highly civilized people like the Italians to be kept indefinitely in a state of tutelage and minority."<sup>409</sup>

Therefore, Stone was ordered not to relinquish his control over the armistice regime while the war was still ongoing. In fact, despite the elimination of the political section of the Allied Commission on March 1, 1945, Ambassador Kirk did not receive Stone's official blessing to establish contact with Italian officials until the following August. Kirk was therefore forced by the circumstances to interpret the role of ambassador as limited to reporting political developments to Washington. Stone continued to present his own political reports to the Allied Advisory Council at least until October 1946, even though the British Ambassador to Italy, Sir Noel Charles, opined that they were no longer necessary.<sup>410</sup>

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<sup>408</sup> Reber to Kirk, August 11, 1944, RG 84 Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, Box 75. Soviet and French delegations were part of the Advisory Council for Italy but were not present on the ACC.

<sup>409</sup> Wilson to Stone, August 23, 1944, RG 84 Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Command, Mediterranean, Box 75.

<sup>410</sup> Notes from Allied Advisory Council Meeting on September 27, 1946, NARA RG 84, Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, Box 105. Fittingly, the historian John P. Diggins notes that "the occupation was presided over by the Allied Military Government, a *pasticcio* of agencies hampered by red tape, jurisdictional conflict, and brass-hat bureaucracy. See: J. P. Diggins, *Mussolini and Fascism: The View from America*, Princeton University Press, 2015, pp. 423-424.

## The Purge of Fascists from Public Institutions

The ACC was charged with purging fascist elements from public administration but not with the enactment of liberal reform in Italy. Before the invasion of Sicily, the Allies identified the institution of the prefecture as the crucial point of Italian civil administration.<sup>411</sup> As such the Allies planned to place one of their officials alongside each prefect to communicate the Allied position, avoiding however, the final responsibility for the decisions because the prefect would be left to sign his orders. The ACC did remove the majority of the prefects compromised by the misdeeds of the Fascist regime whereas the purge of other public institutions suffered due to unreliable conflicting reports regarding the public officials in question and a scarcity of Italian judges who were not compromised by their subordination to the previous regime.

Regarding the question of purging fascist elements from public administration, Stone observed on July 5, 1944, that

The Allies were not responsible for quickly beginning the purge nor bringing it to a successful conclusion. They were only concerned with arresting the most dangerous fascists and removing high ranking fascists from public administration. The possibility of a temporary retention of ex-fascists to handle the most urgent administration functions was not to be excluded in this first phase of operations.<sup>412</sup>

In an August 11 telegram, Stone informed AFHQ in Caserta of the Bonomi government's desire to enlist Allied support in replacing all personnel who had represented fascism in their diplomatic missions abroad.<sup>413</sup> Two weeks later he noted in another letter to Caserta that "the

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<sup>411</sup> See: D. Ellwood. *L'alleato nemico: la politica dell'occupazione anglo-americana in Italia 1943-1946*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1977, p. 243.

<sup>412</sup> H. Moller, *I conti con il fascismo: L'epurazione in Italia 1945-1948*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1996, p. 218. "Gli Alleati non dovevano né avviare subito né tantomeno portare a compimento l'azione epurativa, ma dovevano invece preoccuparsi soltanto di arrestare i fascisti più pericolosi e di rimuovere gli alti gradi dai loro incarichi in seno alla pubblica amministrazione [...] il temporaneo mantenimento in servizio degli ex fascisti per il disbrigo degli affari amministrativi più urgenti non doveva essere escluso in questa prima fase delle operazioni."

<sup>413</sup> Stone to AFHQ Caserta, August 11, 1944, NARA RG 84 Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, Box 75.

Italian Government are bound to be subject to the criticism of their press and public opinion if they appear ready to leave such well known Fascists as Signor Renzetti at their posts and such criticism cannot but affect their standing in the country.”<sup>414</sup>

On December 6, a report by an unnamed OWI officer entitled “Long-Range Policy Guidance for Italy” was forwarded to the embassy in Rome:

Even a casual glance at the Italian press reveals one common trait among the political parties. They all agree that Fascism has been a phenomenon for which Italy is only as responsible as the foreign governments with which it did business. Their effort is to attribute responsibility for the present chaotic situation on the Allies and to pin the blame for Fascism on the small vociferous group who cooperated with the regime in past years. United States policy has made a distinction between Fascism which it fought and destroyed and the Italian people whom we love and respect and with whom we intend to keep friendly relations.<sup>415</sup>

The OWI officer’s point of view is characteristic of the lower-ranking American military personnel who did not have experience in Italy in the 1930s. American war time propaganda furthered the Italian liberal historical interpretation furthered by Carlo Sforza that fascism was a mere parenthesis in the nation’s history. Therefore, many Americans who had not been in Italy in the 1930s believed that fascism never enjoyed a wide consensus among the general population, yet as we have seen, the United States government and its representatives overseas did not publicly demonstrate any significant opposition to fascism until the autumn of 1937, 15 years after Mussolini first became prime minister. The report concluded that nearly all of the public officials in Italy were tainted by fascism, and since all of them could not be fired without a complete breakdown in public services, defascistization would have to take place on a cathartic personal level rather than through punishment. Differently, as noted by the

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<sup>414</sup> Stone to AFHQ Caserta, August 24, 1944, NARA, RG 84, Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, Box 75. Giuseppe Renzetti, born in 1891 in Ascoli Piceno had been an a major in the Royal Italian Army who was sent by Mussolini to establish contact with far right elements in Germany in 1932 on the eve of Hitler’s rise to power. Renzetti had been close to President of the Reichstag Hermann Goering.

<sup>415</sup> OWI Report, December 6, 1944, NARA, RG 84, General Records 1936-1964, Rome Embassy, Box 112.

historian Paolo De Marco, as early as October 1943 the upper echelon of the military and diplomatic establishment demonstrated class solidarity with the plight of major Italian businessmen who had benefitted from the Fascist regime.<sup>416</sup> Along this line, by March 1945, both Ambassador Kirk and Admiral Stone were ready to block the High Court of Epuration's investigation into the causes of the collapse of the Italian Army after the armistice and the subsequent abandonment of Rome to the German Army.<sup>417</sup>

On December 28, 1944, Stone's approval of the restoration of Italian newspapers to Italian control was sharply criticized by Russell Barnes, an officer in the U.S. 5th Army then serving as Director of the Allied Psychological Warfare Branch in Italy: "I do not have confidence that the free press and radio directives will receive much support from a man who speaks of Fascism and Democracy in the terms Admiral Stone has used in committee meetings."<sup>418</sup> Barnes emphasized his support for the free press, he had earned his living as a reporter for the *Detroit News*, but prudently feared a reversion to the domination of newspapers by fascist elements if the Allies relinquished control and was disturbed that he had not been consulted by Stone with regard to this decision. He therefore urged the Ambassador-designate Kirk to try to extend the deadline of the transfer.

On June 23, 1945, Stone summarized the military and political developments in Italy of the preceding two years describing the country as "at the parting of the ways" due to the potential for the "rapid growth of the seeds of an anarchical movement fostered by Moscow to bring Italy within the sphere of Russian influence. Already there are signs that, if present conditions continue, Communism will triumph - - possibly by force."<sup>419</sup> The majority of Americans in

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<sup>416</sup> P. De Marco, *Polvere di piselli, la vita quotidiana a Napoli durante l'occupazione alleata: 1943-1944*, Naples, Liguori, 1996, pp. 15-16.

<sup>417</sup> H. Moller, *I conti con il fascismo: L'epurazione in Italia 1945-1948*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1996, p. 218.

<sup>418</sup> Barnes to Kirk, December 28, 1944, NARA, RG 84 ,General Records 1936-1964, Rome Embassy, Box 112. The OWI (Office of War Information) was a United States Government propaganda agency founded in June 1942.

<sup>419</sup> Stone to Alexander, June 23, 1945, NARA, RG 84, Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, General Records, Box 72.

both military roles and the Foreign Service perceived communism as primarily an economic problem along the lines of Don Luigi Sturzo's "communism of the empty stomach".

## 2.5 Post-War Naples

During the war, the naval yard of Naples was subject to frequent strategic Allied aerial bombardments. After the armistice of September 8, 1943, the city was abandoned and left undefended by the generals Riccardo Pentimalli and Ettore Del Tetto resulting in the immense destruction of the local infrastructure by the retreating Wehrmacht. The British troops of Major Edgar Hume marched into the city on October 1 after the popular uprising against the German army which became known as the Four Days of Naples (September 27-30).<sup>420</sup> In the first days of Allied Military Government, hunger and unemployment were widespread in the city while Allied personnel raced against time to prevent the spread of typhus. At the same a large stream of refugees displaced by the war continued to arrive in the city eventually leaving 200,000 homeless in the area. While the war continued, the port of Naples served as the crucial entry point into the Italian campaign for thousands of Allied soldiers.<sup>421</sup> The massive amount of supplies needed to sustain the war effort led to the expansion of the black market in the city which increased inflation.<sup>422</sup>

The Allies desired to render Italy as independent as possible from imported foodstuffs, partly because they realized that it would be impossible for the new Italian government to repay the cost. While the war continued, with the exception of physical survival, Allied military priorities took precedence over the requirements of the civil population in Southern Italy. An August 1944 directive from the Official Committee on Armistice Terms and Civil

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<sup>420</sup> For a representation of the social urban context of the immediate postwar period in Naples see: P. De Marco, *Polvere di piselli, la vita quotidiana a Napoli durante l'occupazione alleata:1943-1944*, Napoli, Liguori, 1996; *Napoli '44* by Norman Lewis; *La pelle* by Curzio Malaparte.

<sup>421</sup> The military campaign was coordinated at AFHQ in nearby Caserta. In 1943 General Dwight D. Eisenhower was Supreme Commander in the Mediterranean Theatre in preparation for the invasion of Sicily. He was succeeded by three British military officers: General Henry Maitland Wilson until December 1944, Field Marshal Harold Alexander until October 1945 and lastly, Major General William Duthie Morgan.

<sup>422</sup> It is estimated that more than half of the goods on the black market were of Allied origin.

Administration of the Allied Control Commission acknowledged that “the first phase of military necessity and supply to the civil population to prevent the diffusion of disease and social unrest is about to conclude. Now it is necessary to supply the raw materials and equipment so that the Italian industry can fulfill the needs of the Italian population.”<sup>423</sup> Reports from Naples indicated that the city population was suffering from a collective identity crisis, depression, and malnutrition.<sup>424</sup> As noted by the historian John Harper, “Roosevelt finally responded to public outcry over the state of Southern Italy by pressing the British to accept parts of a Combined Liberated Areas Committee (CLAC) proposal for more aid and other concessions.”<sup>425</sup> On September 26, the Anglo-Americans issued a joint statement from Hyde Park, New York which promised additional relief in the form of “food, transport, and industrial rehabilitation.”<sup>426</sup>

The major antifascist political parties of the National Liberation Committee held their conventions in Naples in 1944. In a July 29 report, military observers of the Psychological Warfare Branch of AFHQ noted that these parties struggled to develop a mass following in the city:

The inhabitants do not demonstrate an interest in democracy. They do not support the parties of the CLN and would not vote in large numbers if elections were held. The parties are aware of the situation and are more interested in the details of the electoral system than the creation of a political platform. If Mussolini’s fascist party presented itself it would get the same number of votes as in the rigged elections held under the regime. It seems as if the politicians prefer to argue instead of looking for a resolution to the economic problems. [...] Italy could turn in any

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<sup>423</sup> NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 99.

Liberated on September 30, 1943, the city of Naples remained under the Allied Military Government from October 8, 1943 until July 31, 1946, a longer period than any other major Italian city. For the history of the city of Naples in the 20th century see: A Ghirelli, *Napoli dalla guerra a Bassolino 1943-1998*, Naples, Esselibri, 1998; F. Isabella, *Napoli dall’8 settembre ad Achille Lauro*, Naples, Guida Editori, 1980; G. Galasso, *Napoli*, Storia delle città italiane, Rome, Laterza, 1987; *Storia D’Italia: Le Regioni dall’Unità a oggi - La Campania* Edited by Paolo Macry and Pasquale Villani, Turin, Einaudi, Giulio, 1990.

<sup>424</sup> NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 106.

<sup>425</sup> J.L. Harper, *America and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-1948*, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 27.

<sup>426</sup> Ibid.

political direction at the moment. The postponement of the elections worsens the problem: the old fascist movement gathers strength because the democratic institutions do not exist at this moment and the problems are attributed to the new democratic system. Many officials of the fascist militia were not purged.<sup>427</sup>

The reformist season in Naples was represented by the mandate of Gennaro Fermariello of the Action Party who became mayor on January 8, 1945. In his inaugural address, Fermariello proclaimed that the municipal administration would focus on the most urgent problem faced by the population which he identified as the return to normal civil life.<sup>428</sup> His stewardship suffered from the disastrous state of municipal finances and the lack of autonomy allowed by the Allied Military Government which maintained veto power on all major decisions. In heavily damaged Naples, reconstruction did not begin in earnest until the autumn of 1945, two full years after the city's liberation.<sup>429</sup> Southern Italy was characterized by the presence of large tracts of uncultivated land known as *latifondi* and Naples served as a transit point for the surrounding area. In the immediate post-war period the influential absentee landowners continued to oppose agrarian reform and a high percentage of the rural population remained illiterate due to a lack of public schools.<sup>430</sup>

### **The Naples Consulate General Reopens**

On July 1, 1944, the U.S. Consulate General in Naples became the first establishment of its kind to reopen to the public in former enemy territory. At the time its jurisdiction extended to all of liberated Italy with the exception of Sicily. The consul general was the 52 year old

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<sup>427</sup> NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 105.

<sup>428</sup> NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 148.

<sup>429</sup> For an in depth analysis of the course of World War II in Naples see: G. Gribaudo, *Guerra totale: Tra bombe alleate e violenze naziste Napoli e il fronte meridionale 1940-1944*, Turin, Bollati Boringhieri, 2005;f and S. Pocock, *Campania 1943*, Naples, Three Mice Books, 2009. The liberation of Naples is the subject of Nanni Loy's film *Le Quattro giornate di Napoli*.

<sup>430</sup> It was these conditions which inspired the future President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano to join the Italian Communist Party in November 1945 as noted by Pasquale Chessa. See: P. Chessa, *L'ultimo comunista: la presa di potere di Giorgio Napolitano*, Milan, Chiarelettere, 2013.

George L. Brandt (1892-1971) who was described by his subordinate William L. Blue as a “real character” and “gruff” but also a “decent man with a good heart.”<sup>431</sup> Brandt was born and raised in Washington D.C., the city to which his German father had immigrated.<sup>432</sup> In the 1920s he had been an understudy of Coert Du Bois in the State Department’s Visa Division. Later, in the first two years of the war, he organized and headed a special office in the State Department charged with aiding American citizens trapped in the war-torn nations. Then, on October 8, 1941, he was nominated Counselor of the U.S. Embassy in Berlin where, due to the absence of Ambassador Hugh Wilson from 1938 onward, he received Foreign Minister Von Ribbentrop’s declaration of war on December 11, 1941.<sup>433</sup> Brandt “had a deep respect for the Foreign Service, and for the people in it, and thought that it was just about the finest career that anyone could have.”<sup>434</sup> Like the vast majority of his colleagues he did not approve of political nominees as ambassadors because he felt, with few exceptions, that they did not possess the gravitas to understand foreign situations and how the United States should react to them. At one point he was offered an ambassadorship by President Roosevelt but turned it down because he lacked the means to finance the substantial social commitments.

A series of letters to his daughter illustrate Brandt’s impressions of his assignment to Naples, the first of which is dated November 5, 1944: “I wanted to work closer to the fighting

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<sup>431</sup> ADST interview, William L. Blue with Charles Stuart Kennedy, April 11, 1991.

<sup>432</sup> After graduating from a business high school, he worked as a stenographer at Washington Naval Yard. In 1915 he decided to apply for a position at the State Department as an interpreter to fulfill his desire to see the world and make use of his talent for learning foreign languages. His first assignment was to the U.S. Embassy in Istanbul where he learned Turkish. After a year he was reassigned to Cairo where he continued with Turkish, began to study Arabic, and wrote a comprehensive analysis of the Egyptian textile market. In 1924, Brandt became the Assistant to the Chief of the Visa Division of the State Department, Coert Du Bois. In this role Brandt aided the House Commission on Immigration in drafting amendments to the Immigration Act of 1924. He replaced Du Bois as Chief of the Visa Division on June 1, 1927.

<sup>433</sup> C. Shirley, *December 1941: 31 Days that Changed America and Saved the World*, Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 2013, p. 229. In 1938, Brandt traveled extensively throughout Germany and Austria to report on the treatment of Jews to the State Department. In July of the same year he served as a technical advisor to the American delegation at the Evian Conference.

<sup>434</sup> Brandt’s first wife, Eva Emily Finotti, was the granddaughter of the Captain Gustavo Finotti, born in Ferrara in 1812 who moved to Maryland in 1851. The Finotti family is considered the first Italian-American family in the history of Prince George’s County. The businessman Finotti became the Italian Consul in Boston soon after the unification of Italy in 1861.

line. I sought the most helpful job I could do. Incidentally it is the toughest one I have had in what will soon be 30 years of service.”<sup>435</sup> Ten days later, he commented on the prospects for peace after Roosevelt’s reelection.

This worst of all wars should give new and serious meaning to Sherman’s saying that war is hell and unite us all honestly and determinedly to seek to prevent another. For that reason I am glad the President was reelected, although with the Americans I dislike to see the Presidency too long with one party. Political change, with a bi-party system, has proven beneficial to our country, but we came to an emergency where change would have been dangerous and too risky against proven leadership.<sup>436</sup>

The physical limitations presented by the edifice housing the consulate general was a growing problem mere months after the latter reopened. On November 27, Brandt noted in another personal letter: “My office is outgrowing its quarters which were as large as I could get when I arrived, and I am almost panicky about what to do, space is so scarce here.”<sup>437</sup> Then, on January 10, 1945: “I am more busy than ever now, arranging to move the office into a new building of four floors, 30 rooms, which we will entirely occupy, as we urgently need larger quarters with the work and staff increasing constantly.”<sup>438</sup> A month later, on February 19, Brandt moved the consulate general into a building located in Piazza Torretta at the junction of Via Piedigrotta and Via Mergellina with Riviera di Chiaia. The building, once property of the Fascist Party, had been requisitioned by the Allies shortly after the liberation of the city.

In April 1946, Brandt began to search for yet another edifice in the city to host the consulate general. It proved difficult to purchase property due to the local practice of paying part of the purchase price up front with another part undeclared; the embassy did not desire to sign a contract that cheated the Italian government of tax revenue. On June 1, 1947, the U.S.

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<sup>435</sup> Brandt to daughter, November 5, 1944.

<sup>436</sup> Brandt to daughter, November 15, 1944.

<sup>437</sup> Brandt to daughter, November 27, 1944.

<sup>438</sup> Brandt to daughter, January 10, 1945.

government bought the Grand Hotel in Via Caracciolo along the waterline. The assistance of the Neapolitan born Homer M. Byington Jr, then counselor of the embassy, was crucial in the preparation of the contract. Byington wrote to Secretary of State George C. Marshall on June 1, 1947:

The contract, which provides for the conveyance of the property by means of constituting a specially formed corporation having full title thereto and for the subsequent delivery of all shares of the corporation to the Embassy, has been made with Signor Salvatore Cimaglia of Rome. The corporation will thereupon be dissolved and its assets (i.e. the Grand Hotel property) transferred to the Government of the United States of America.<sup>439</sup>

Of course, Byington must have imagined that someday he might continue his family's tradition as consul general in Naples (which did in fact occur from 1962 to 1973). The Grand Hotel in *Piazza Principe di Napoli* was torn down and the new consular building was completed in 1952. Foreign Service Inspector Cochran recommended in 1947 that the State Department "likewise procure one of the most desirable villas in Naples for the residence of the Consul General, completely furnish it, and provide sufficient allowances to permit the Consul General to afford it, and to utilize it appropriately for representation purposes."<sup>440</sup> During his five years in Naples, Consul General Brandt lived in a chalet on the grounds of the Villa Gallotti in Posillipo.

Given Naples' history as a point of departure for immigration to the United States, it is not surprising that the two largest sections of the consular workforce were dedicated to visa and citizenship services. In 1946, Consul Frederick Jandrey supervised the visa section which included a stenographer, five office workers, and six typists, whereas the citizenship section boasted two vice-consuls in addition to three stenographers, six office employees, and two typists.<sup>441</sup> Consular administration and personnel was handled by Consul William E. Flournoy

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<sup>439</sup> Byington to Marshall, June 1, 1947, NARA, RG 84, U.S. Consulate Naples Classified General Records 1937-1958, Box 3 (1946-1947).

<sup>440</sup> Ibid.

<sup>441</sup> Consular workforce chart of April 1946, NARA, RG 84, U.S. Consulate Naples Classified General Records 1937-1958, Box 3, (1946-1947). Frederick Jandrey also managed notary services

whereas Vice-Consul William L. Blue focused on commerce, transportation, and protection of property of American citizens, many of whom were the wives of Italians who had remained in Italy during the war and had fled southward in 1944.<sup>442</sup> Vice-Consul Robert S. Hoard was responsible for the citizenship section while a rare female officer, Darthea Speyer, managed veterans affairs and social assistance.

On April 12, 1946, Brandt wrote to Secretary of State Byrnes to request the assignment of an additional career Foreign Service officer and another non-career vice-consul to reduce the workload on his staff. Due to the scarcity of clerical help in the service in this period “it was not uncommon to find a consul general typing out his own mail on Saturdays and Sundays.”<sup>443</sup>

Foreign Service inspector H. Merle Cochran reported on January 20, 1947, that Brandt

has built up at Naples a good staff, which is functioning efficiently, with an extremely high morale. Mr. Brandt exercises close supervision over his officers and clerks, but does this in such a manner as to cause them to feel sincerely that they are benefitting from Mr. Brandt’s many years of experience in the Foreign Service and from his special qualifications as an instructor. As evidence of this respect and affection, it should be noted that each one of the three career officers who were interviewed at the time of inspection expressed voluntarily a desire to remain at Naples as long as Mr. Brandt is there.<sup>444</sup>

Brandt updated the organizational situation in a letter on November 16, 1946, noting that his time-consuming duties as supervisory consul general included the direction of immigrant visa and repatriation work for all of Italy. In all, there were 83 people on the payroll: five career FSO’s, one reserve officer, 18 American office employees, and 59 alien employees. The five career FSO’s was fewer than the eight who usually staffed the consulate general in the late 1930s whereas the number of local employees was greater in the post-war period.

In addition to the supervisory Naples consular office, from 1946 to 1950 the United States maintained consulates in Florence, Genoa, Milan, Palermo, Turin, and Venice while the

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<sup>442</sup> ADST interview, William L. Blue with Charles Stuart Kennedy, April 11, 1991.

<sup>443</sup> “The U.S. Foreign Service”, in *Fortune*, July 1946, p. 84.

<sup>444</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 81, Naples Consulate General, January 1947.

consular section of the embassy covered the regions of Lazio, Umbria, Marches, Abruzzo, Molise and Sardinia. The Kansan Walter W. Orebaugh (1910-2001) was appointed as U.S. Consul in Florence on October 28, 1944.<sup>445</sup> During the war, Orebaugh had opened the first American consulate in the Principality of Monaco but was soon arrested by the soldiers of the Italian Sixth Army and imprisoned at Gubbio (Umbria). He escaped from captivity with the help of a group of Italian partisans and joined the Umbrian resistance. In Florence, Orebaugh was influential in the decision to buy the Calcagnini Palace in Lungarno Vespucci for the site of the consulate. In 1948, he was replaced in Florence by the Alabaman George P. Waller who had a similar wartime experience.<sup>446</sup> Waller chose to remain in Luxembourg after the German occupation in order to aid the local population in their struggle by granting visas to the United States for as many refugees as possible.

While Orebaugh and Waller were already Foreign Service officers during the war, the Princeton graduate Claiborne Pell was stationed in Sicily with the U.S. Coast Guard where he made use of his excellent Italian language skills.<sup>447</sup> Pell was the son of Herbert Pell who had served as Chief of the U.S. Legation in Lisbon from 1937 to 1941.<sup>448</sup> After entering the Foreign Service in 1945, he was assigned as vice-consul in Bratislava. In a cable to the Prague embassy Pell correctly predicted the February 1948 communist *coup d'état*.<sup>449</sup> After his

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<sup>445</sup> Orebaugh entered the Foreign Service in 1932. He had served as vice-consul in Trieste from 1937 to 1939. In 1941, he was the U.S. Consul in Nice under the Vichy regime, where he helped Jewish refugees emigrate to the United States. He also collaborated clandestinely with members of the French resistance who passed on information about German troop movements. See: W. Orebaugh and C. Jose, *Diplomat in Striped Pants: A U.S. Diplomat Joins the Italian Resistance*, Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Publishing, 1992, p. 4.

<sup>446</sup> Waller was a graduate of the University of Virginia where he studied Greek and Latin, German language, as well as literature, history, philosophy and science. He joined the consular service in 1912 and held posts in Nova Scotia, Austria, Greece, Japan, Mexico and Tunisia.

<sup>447</sup> ADST interview, Claiborne Pell with Charles Stuart Kennedy, April 9, 1987.

<sup>448</sup> Herbert, a political nominee of Franklin Roosevelt, was an heir to the Lorillard tobacco fortune, was a progressive and internationalist democrat.

<sup>449</sup> Present for the coup in Prague was also Third Secretary/Vice-Consul Louise Armstrong. Armstrong, who from 1949-1950 was Vice-Consul in Palermo notes that the Foreign Service Personnel Commission sent the major part of the Third Secretaries from Czechoslovakia to Italy, thus indicating the importance of the country as a target of communist subversion. See: ADST interview Louise Armstrong with Charles Stuart Kennedy, January 13, 2000.

expulsion from Czechoslovakia by the Soviet authorities, he was transferred to Genoa where he remained until 1949. As a result of his personal experience Pell became more perceptive to the risks associated with the various communist movements in Europe. He considered communism a system contrary to human nature, noting the difference between the theoretical discussions held in university classrooms in the 1930s and the reality of having seen communism's imposition beyond the Iron Curtain. Pell later served as U.S. Senator from Rhode Island from 1961 to 1997.

Another young Foreign Service officer who served in Genoa for slightly over a year (1946-1947) was the Yale graduate William E. Knight. Born in 1922 in Tarrytown, N.Y. into a family of patent attorneys Knight had served as a pilot in the Army Air Force in Southern Italy during World War II. As a recent transfer from the military, Knight noted in his memoirs that he felt guilty about his newfound lavish lifestyle which fulfilled a Foreign Service expectation that diplomats live in "quiet dignity", which meant flying first class, household servants, and entertaining senior officers at his seaside apartment.<sup>450</sup> The economic conditions throughout Liguria were extremely difficult and housing remained scarce due to the recent British naval bombardment of Genoa. Still, in late 1946, Knight observed on a trip to Santa Margherita and Rapallo that the *dolce vita* was already in full flower: a state of affairs that he interpreted as likely to increase the possibility of a communist takeover.<sup>451</sup> He was without significant preconceptions of the nation's history or political customs although he quickly picked up Italian language due to having studied French for several years. During his assignment in Genoa he was invited to visit friends in Cremona who had taken up residence in the conspicuous Palazzo Farinacci which hosted a record collection of Mussolini's speeches; the edifice had belonged to former National Secretary of the Fascist Party Roberto Farinacci. Upon listening to one of the speeches Knight reflected that "we heard thousands and thousands of voices screaming hysterically, "Doochay, Doochay" and wondered where they

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<sup>450</sup> W. E. Knight, *Letters to the Twenty-Second Century*, Bethesda, Maryland, Araluen Press, 1998, p. 133.

<sup>451</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.

had all gone to, for I have yet to find an Italian who will say that he was at one time a fascist.”<sup>452</sup>

## **2.6 Ambassador Alexander Kirk, 1945-1946**

Paying heed to his mentors William Phillips and Breckinridge Long, the wealthy Alexander Kirk made a large donation to Roosevelt’s electoral campaign and was named nominated as ambassador to Italy on December 8, 1944.<sup>453</sup> A month later, on January 8, 1945, he presented his credentials at the Quirinal Palace to his long-time friend Prince Umberto of Piedmont who was acting as the Lieutenant General of the Realm. The embassy in Via Veneto was thus officially reopened after three years in which representation of American interests in Italy had been delegated to Switzerland. For his residence Kirk rented the first floor of the Barberini Palace which he furnished at his own expense. In the first months of 1945 he traveled between Rome and Caserta but did not enjoy dealing with the military authorities. That August, *Life* magazine journalist Noel F. Busch described him as “probably the most outstanding career diplomat now functioning for the U.S. State Department.”<sup>454</sup>

In line with established Allied policy, Kirk believed it was imperative to convince the Italians to do everything possible to help themselves recover from the war. For this reason he insisted that the Allied Military Government loosen the restrictions placed upon the Italian government so that the latter could gain prestige and authority in the eyes of the Italian people.<sup>455</sup> On the eve of the liberation of Northern Italy, he wrote that “First consideration is order and emphasis should be on the responsibility of the Italians to establish and maintain order. Everything should be done to charge Italian government with that responsibility, as well

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<sup>452</sup> Ibid., pp. 135-136.

<sup>453</sup> Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 39.

<sup>454</sup> N. F. Busch, “Ambassador Kirk”, *Life*, August 13, 1945, p. 81.

<sup>455</sup> John Wesley Jones interview by Richard D. McKinzie, June 8, 1974, Harry S. Truman Library.

as for eventual rehabilitation both with and without foreign aid.<sup>456</sup> Given the precarious economic situation throughout the country, Kirk became frustrated by the squabbles between the National Liberation Committee (CLN) parties of the Bonomi government. Looming above all was the growing threat of communism of which Italian politicians in exile had warned American authorities as early as 1943.<sup>457</sup> Kirk reported to Secretary of State Stettinius on February 10, 1945:

It is clear that the Communists are urging young elements of the Party to enroll in the Italian Armed Forces with a view to carrying on subversive and seditious propaganda. It is understood that before enrolling these trusted elements receive special training from specialists on their secret mission. [...] This forms part of the general plan whereby Communists hope to corrode the State organization from within rather than attack it at present violently from without.<sup>458</sup>

This confirms the historiographical consensus that Palmiro Togliatti, the leader of the Italian Communist Party, sought to bide his time through participation in the Bonomi government in order to create an aura of democratic respectability and assure the party's survival.<sup>459</sup> As the months passed and the communists became more aggressive, Kirk's former subordinate George Kennan, then serving in Moscow, held no illusions about Russian operating methods regarding infiltration of democratic institutions in Western Europe. He wrote to AFHQ in Caserta amid reports of a planned communist *coup d'état* in France and Italy the following October:

In essence, all these efforts at disguise of authority reflect basic Russian conviction that power is safest and most desirable when divorced from responsibility. Hence, Russian predilection for seeking maximum of power and minimum of responsibility: for puppet states, front organizations, individual stooges. Kremlin desires that its power should

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<sup>456</sup> Kirk to Stettinius, April 11, 1945, NARA, RG 84 Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, Box 91.

<sup>457</sup> A. Brogi, *L'Italia e l'egemonia americana nel mediterraneo*, p. 23.

<sup>458</sup> Kirk to Stettinius, February 10, 1945, NARA, RG 84, General Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander, Box 82.

<sup>459</sup> See: E. Aga-Rossi e V. Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin, Il PCI e la politica estera stalinista negli archivi di Mosca*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1997, p. 104.

be felt but not seen, and that it acquire in this way something of the awesome quality of the supernatural.<sup>460</sup>

Despite the threat of communism, Kirk and Kennan did not embrace all Italian political elements which opposed the spread of Soviet influence. In particular, they remained hostile to the populist Uomo Qualunque party of the Neapolitan journalist Guglielmo Giannini which had gained widespread support in Southern Italy. On January 30, 1946, Kirk reported to Secretary of State Byrnes: “the embassy agrees generally with the conclusions drawn [...] that the Uomo Qualunque movement bears certain resemblances to the early fascist movement.”<sup>461</sup> On March 1, Kennan described the formation as “neo-Fascist Party adopting Democratic title ‘Fronte del Uomo Qualunque’ while using slogans almost entirely borrowed from Mussolini” and referred to Giannini’s newspaper *Buon Senso* as a “party rag” waging a “slanderous and base campaign against the WFTU.”<sup>462</sup> It is important to remember that while the career Foreign Service officers were generally conservative, as a highly educated elite they disdained populist movements. Much different was the observation of a military counter intelligence report produced in the Naples area on May 1 which concluded that Giannini’s party was “seen with respect by the majority of impartial observers even if it seems in slight decline.”<sup>463</sup>

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<sup>460</sup> Kennan to AFHQ Caserta (repeated to Rome), July 15, 1945, NARA, RG 84, General Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander, Box 82.

<sup>461</sup> Kirk to Byrnes, January 30, 1946, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1954, Box 5. In 1938, as chargé d’affaires in Moscow, Kirk had served as the younger Kennan’s mentor. Seven years later, in the interval between the CFM Moscow of December 1945 and CFM Paris in April 1946, the negotiations on the future of the Italian border with Yugoslavia took place in Moscow between Kennan and Soviet Vice-Foreign Minister Vladimir Dekanozov. It was an ironic development because Kirk was a secondary figure as ambassador to the enemy turned co-belligerent Italy.

<sup>462</sup> Kennan to State Department (repeated to Rome), March 1, 1946, RG 84 Classified General Records, 1946-1964 U.S. Embassy Rome, Box 5. Strangely enough, Kennan cited Giuseppe Di Vittorio who claimed that the party was created to serve interests of large landowners and capitalist authors of Fascism. The WFTU was the World Federation of Trade Unions which was founded on October 3, 1945.

<sup>463</sup> Counter Intelligence Report, May 1, 1946, NARA, RG 84, Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, General Records, Box 116. The reports notes that Giannini’s April 1946 speech in Naples was enthusiastically welcomed by a crowd of 15,000: which was the largest crowd for a political speech in the post-war period. In addition, Uomo Qualunque boasted 20,000 members and roughly the same number of sympathizers in Naples.

## Revision of the Armistice Terms and the Italian Peace Treaty

In 1945, Ambassador Kirk was favorable to transforming the armistice terms between the Allies and Italy into a provisional peace treaty, partly as a means of forestalling a potential backlash of Italian nationalism but also, as noted by Renato Prunas the General Secretary of the Italian Foreign Ministry, to allow Italy to return to its historical missions as a civilizing geopolitical force.<sup>464</sup> Similarly, Kirk's subordinate, First Secretary John Wesley Jones recalled:

We felt, because the Italians had collaborated with us during the last part of the European war and since there was a provisional Italian Government which we recognized and dealt with, that we should permit, through the terms of a new instrument, this government to have the authority and the power rather than the Allied Commission, with the French, Russians, British, and Americans on it, continuing to run the country from a military government standpoint.<sup>465</sup>

Jones noted however,

The British were always reluctant to be generous or helpful to the Italians in the early days. They were always a few steps behind. And this was particularly true of their military, who felt very strongly about the position of the Italians and their contribution to the war against the British, their contribution to the Germans, their assistance to the Germans, their stab in the back of France at the time the British were still trying to help the French.<sup>466</sup>

Jones' understanding of the situation echoed the Italian diplomat Renato Prunas' considerations of British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden who at the August 1943 Quebec Conference, with the support of the Foreign Office, sought to maintain Italy in a "permanently

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<sup>464</sup> Prunas to Bonomi, September 29, 1945, in *Documenti diplomatici italiani*, serie X, vol. I, D. 441. Cited in G. Borzoni, *Renato Prunas: Diplomatico (1892-1951)*, Catanzaro, Rubbettino, p. 401.

<sup>465</sup> John Wesley Jones interview with Richard D. McKenzie, June 8, 1974, (Truman Library)

<sup>466</sup> *Ibid.*

weak” position in the Mediterranean.<sup>467</sup> During the war the American armed forces had scarcely fought against those of Italy whereas Mussolini’s foreign policy in the Mediterranean had greatly irritated the British since 1935. The British Foreign Office did, however, eventually support changes to the armistice terms as noted by Waldemar Gallman, the American deputy chief of mission in London, who wrote to the State Department and AFHQ in Caserta on October 12, 1945: “British Foreign Office shares our view that many provisions which have become obsolete or inoperative should be cancelled. Principal difficulty, according to Hoyer Willam, is to find method of doing so which will not give Russians excuse for cancelling clauses they do not like in the Balkan armistices.”<sup>468</sup>

In short, unilateral action by the British and Americans would invite Russians to respond in kind in Romania and Bulgaria. Long-time career men such as Kirk and Kennan did not hold out hope for political freedom behind Soviet lines and were well aware that the British government was taking a harder line on Soviet expansionism than that of Secretary of State Byrnes whom they accused of appeasing Stalin. Throughout 1945 American diplomats had chronicled Soviet political repression in Eastern Europe. These dispatches were often seen in Washington as unduly alarmist. As noted by the historian James Miller, upon returning to Washington for consultations in November 1945, Kirk was “extremely critical of the general conduct of the foreign policy of Byrnes, particularly with the management of the negotiations for the Italian peace treaty.”<sup>469</sup> Therefore, he proposed a unilateral American declaration of peace with Italy, an idea which, in light of Soviet obstinacy, gained support in the State Department and forced Byrnes to intervene against it.<sup>470</sup> The proposed unilateral peace treaty would also have had the effect of bolstering Kirk’s own influence and prestige as ambassador while eliminating the need for the Allied Commission.

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<sup>467</sup> Prunas to Bonomi, September 29, 1945, in *Documenti diplomatici italiani*, serie X, vol. I, D. 441. Cited in G. Borzoni, *Renato Prunas: Diplomatico (1892-1951)*, Catanzaro, Rubbettino, p. 401.

<sup>468</sup> Gallman to State, October 12, 1945, NARA, RG 84, Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, General Records, Box 64.

<sup>469</sup> J.E. Miller, *The United States and Italy, 1940-1950: The Politics and Diplomacy of Stabilization*, Chapel Hill, North Carolina University Press, 1984, pp. 193-194.

<sup>470</sup> *Ibid.*

Byrnes did not have a high consideration of the men under his command in the State Department. On the other hand businessmen moonlighting as ambassadors received high marks for their economic reporting.<sup>471</sup> Byrnes' autocratic operating method was humorously recalled by Foreign Service officer Theodore Achilles, a member of the American delegation to the Council of Foreign Ministers in London who eventually became the Director of EUR:

Like usual, at the end of the first day of meetings, I typed a telegram to the State Department summarizing that which had had happened during the day. I brought it to Jimmy Dunn who signed it with his initials, and I brought it to Secretary Byrnes for his signature. Secretary Byrnes looked at the telegram and said "What is this?" I responded: "This is the regular telegram to the State Department to report the events of the day. Byrnes responded. "Dear God, perhaps I will tell the President sooner or later what happened, but I'll never tell those little bastards at the State Department."<sup>472</sup>

The Secretary of State did not seem to care that Achilles qualified as one of those "little bastards". Again, like Roosevelt, Byrnes considered the State Department a bureaucracy that thwarted effective action.

At the December 1945 Council of Foreign Ministers negotiations in Moscow Byrnes attempted to establish momentum with the Soviets toward the signing of peace treaties by offering American collaboration for the peaceful development of nuclear energy.<sup>473</sup> Regarding the Balkan situation, he obtained Soviet consent to include at least one member of the non-communist opposition in the Bulgarian government in exchange for the recognition of that government.<sup>474</sup> Kennan, then serving as chargé d'affaires in Moscow, believed it was "absurd

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<sup>471</sup> "Career Type Outmoded: Businessmen-Diplomats Preferred", *Lubbock Morning Avalanche*, Texas, February 9, 1946, p. 6.

<sup>472</sup> ADST interview, Theodore Achilles with Richard D. McKinzie, November 13, 1972.

<sup>473</sup> These talks failed due to amendments desired by conservative American lawmakers and the Soviet refusal due to the lack of veto power in the U.N. Security Council on the potential activities of the proposed atomic agency. Furthermore, the Soviet military occupation of Warsaw and the subsequent incarceration of non-communist politicians had changed the facts on the ground.

<sup>474</sup> C Kennedy-Pipe, *Stalin's Cold War: Soviet Strategy in Europe, 1943 to 1956*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1995, p. 88.

to suppose that anything essential was going to be changed by the inclusion of one or two non-Communist ministers in the cabinets of countries which already had a political system along the lines of the Soviet NKVD, entirely under Russian control” and that Byrnes’ “main purpose is to achieve some sort of agreement, he doesn’t much care what [...] for its political effect at home.”<sup>475</sup> Elbridge Durbrow, then director of the State Department’s Eastern European division in Washington, also spoke out against recognition of the governments in Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania.

In the final days of 1945, Truman expressed his dissatisfaction with Byrnes regarding the lack of updates from Moscow. In short, Roosevelt’s fear of Byrnes’ independence was justified. The Secretary of State considered himself more qualified than Truman in economic administration on the home front, legislative experience, and foreign affairs. On January 5, a few days after meeting with Byrnes, Truman wrote that he was tired of “babying the Soviets”, a quip which illustrated his shift to a more intransigent position.<sup>476</sup> Still, in his State of the Union speech on January 3 he chose to concentrate on domestic administration and did not mention the recently concluded Moscow Conference.

Truman’s warnings about the consequences of demobilization on the United States’ strategic position in the world went unheeded and “only a serious foreign crisis could have reversed this trend.”<sup>477</sup> As noted by the historian Alessandro Brogi “the leaders in Washington, especially in the immediate post-war period, confronted less ‘moral and philosophical’ dilemmas, than the difficult task of presenting to the American valid reasons for a

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<sup>475</sup> D. Robertson, *Sly and Able: A Political Biography of James F. Byrnes*, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 1994, p. 454. As noted by John Harper, Kennan had been very skeptical toward the pro-Soviet opinions inside the American military hierarchy during the war. See: J. L. Harper, *American Visions of Europe: Franklin D. Roosevelt, George F. Kennan, and Dean G. Acheson*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 209.

<sup>476</sup> For Truman memorandum of January 5, 1946 see: H. Truman, *1945: Year of Decisions*, Memoirs, Volume 1, Garden City, NY, Doubleday, 1955, pp, 551-552.

<sup>477</sup> See: R. A. Pollard, “The National Security State Reconsidered: Truman and Economic Containment”, in *The Truman Presidency*, ed. Michael James Lacey, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 208. As a result, the U.S. armed forces shrank from about 12 million in June 1945 to 1.5 million in June 1947.”

commitment without precedent to international developments.”<sup>478</sup> Stalin’s radio broadcast to the Soviet people of February 9, 1946, was interpreted as a delayed declaration of war against the United States by Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson, Navy Secretary James Forrestal and American newspapers.<sup>479</sup> Truman remained ambivalent, he was frustrated by the continued difficulty in the post-war negotiations but took comfort in the fact that Stalin’s speech was intended for consumption in the Soviet Union. A few days later he publicly downplayed the significance of Stalin’s speech in an address to the Women’s Press club by declaring “Well, you know we always have to demagogue a little, before elections.”<sup>480</sup> In fact, after meeting Stalin at the Potsdam Conference, Truman continued to believe for several years that “difficulties with the Russians reflected Stalin’s internal political problems — interference from a recalcitrant Politburo was the most frequent explanation.”<sup>481</sup>

Two weeks after Stalin’s speech, Kennan dictated the Long Telegram from Moscow which advocated a hard-line approach to Soviet aggression and came to be known as the containment policy.<sup>482</sup> Byrnes, focused on maintaining an open dialogue in order to obtain Soviet cooperation on the peace treaties and seeking to preserve his own relevancy, did not agree with Kennan’s analysis. Both Byrnes and Truman were internationalists and supporters of the Wilsonian universal appeal of democratic ideals. As such they identified with the principles of the United Nations Charter and hoped to establish opposition to Soviet aggrandizement inside the new organization. Foreign Service officers like Homer Byington Jr. did not believe that the

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<sup>478</sup> A. Brogi, *L’Italia e l’egemonia americana nel Mediterraneo*, Florence, La Nuova Italia, 1996, p. 25.

<sup>479</sup> For Acheson’s reaction see: D. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, pp. 150-151.

<sup>480</sup> D. Bostorff, *Proclaiming the Truman Doctrine: The Cold War Call to Arms*, Texas A&M University Press, 2008, p. 19.

<sup>481</sup> J. Gaddis, “The insecurities of victory: the United States and the perception of the Soviet threat after World War II”, in *The Truman Presidency*, Editor Michael J. Lacey, Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 251.

<sup>482</sup> Kennan’s “Long Telegram” which would become the basis of the containment theory on February 22, 1946 asserted that the Soviet leadership did not believe in the possibility of a peaceful coexistence with the West, that the Soviet system would eventually collapse due to internal problems, and that the Soviets were receptive only to the logic of force. Therefore, it would be enough to contrast the Soviet attempts of expansion with force wherever necessary.

U.N. would serve as an effective tool for resolving international disputes.<sup>483</sup> As press director of the U.S. delegation at the San Francisco Conference Byington had invited his Soviet counterpart along with the latter's "secretary" to dinner. Although both Russians spoke English proficiently, "conversation was almost impossible since neither of them would say much in front of the other."<sup>484</sup> Therefore, Byington concluded that the "secretary" was a secret police agent and surmised that the Soviets had not changed their operating methods from the 1930s, which would render future cooperation difficult if not impossible.<sup>485</sup> Byington was not alone in his reaction as "what struck most observers at the time was the utter imperviousness of Stalin's regime to the gestures of restraint and goodwill that emanated from the West during and immediately after the war."<sup>486</sup>

In the first days of March 1946, President Truman traveled to his home state of Missouri with former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. On March 5 Churchill delivered the Iron Curtain speech at Westminster College in which he depicted communism as a threat to Christian civilization and vented his frustration for the postwar reality in Eastern Europe, which he attributed to the Soviet Union for not respecting the agreements reached at Yalta. The initial response of the American public to the speech was lukewarm. The war in the Pacific had ended only six months before and as American soldiers from overseas, the public quickly lost interest in foreign affairs. Telling of Truman's opinion was that he had declined the opportunity to suggest modifications to the draft of the speech prior to its delivery.

Given these developments, it is not surprising that prior to the CFM in Paris (April-May 1946) Truman told Byrnes to "stick to your guns" in the negotiations for the Italian Peace Treaty. This hardline approach had long been desired by Kirk and Kennan who well

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<sup>483</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p.61 footnote.

<sup>484</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 36.

<sup>485</sup> When asked about his father's opinion of President Roosevelt, Homer M. Byington III mentioned that his father would have resigned if Vice-President Henry A. Wallace (1940-1944) had managed to become President of the United States by winning the 1948 election. In late 1946 Wallace was still arguing for continued dialogue with the Soviets and recognition of a Soviet sphere of influence.

<sup>486</sup> J. Gaddis, "The insecurities of victory: the United States and the perception of the Soviet threat after World War II", in *The Truman Presidency*, Editor Michael J. Lacey, Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 261.

understood the potential consequences of a punitive peace as exemplified by the rebirth of German nationalism which led to the collapse of the Weimar Republic. When the first session of the CFM Paris ended on May 16 there remained differences between the American and Soviet positions on the fate of Italy's colonies and the eastern border with Yugoslavia, most notably the city of Trieste. Upon returning to the United States, Byrnes made it clear that that the U.S. was "willing to agree to limited reparations, provided they do not deprive Italy of the forces necessary for her to subsist without external assistance" while reiterating that the United States "was not going to advance millions of dollars to Italy to produce good to paid as reparations to any of our allies."<sup>487</sup>

Interestingly, despite the contemporaneous campaign for the institutional referendum on the monarchy, the Paris CFM meetings were the political development most closely followed with in Naples as the local population did not see any legitimacy to the Yugoslav claim on Trieste, but were worried that Stalin would give his full support to Marshal Tito, resulting in a situation in which a compromise would be impossible.<sup>488</sup> Similarly, in June 1946, anti-Allied protests fomented by newspaper coverage erupted in Italian cities after the announcement of preliminary terms regarding the Italian border with Yugoslavia. On July 11, Admiral Stone received a note of apology from De Gasperi for the protests.<sup>489</sup> In his political report to the Allied Advisory Council for Italy covering the second half of the same month, Stone recognized that although the peace treaty was an element of primary importance to the Italian people,

Neither the Italian government nor the Italian people have had a determining voice. [...] Meanwhile, Italy's international position remains juridically unchanged, since the Italian Government has been too occupied with the broad problems of internal organization and long

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<sup>487</sup> Audio clip "James Byrnes on the Postwar Treaty Talks in Paris" May 1946, found at <http://www.history.com/speeches/speeches-james-f-byrnes-on-the-postwar-treaty-talks-in-paris>. Accessed October 18, 2016.

<sup>488</sup> Counterintelligence Report for April 1946, NARA RG 84 Records of the Political advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, General Records 1946, Box 105.

<sup>489</sup> Summary of August 2, 1946, meeting of the Allied Advisory Council, NARA RG 84 Records of the Political advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, General Records 1946, Box 105.

term international arrangements to be able to study and comment on the proposed revision of the 1943 armistice terms.<sup>490</sup>

The following month Stone confirmed that “the question of the Peace Treaty continues to loom over Italy, the delay in its approval lends credence to the wide spread pessimism that its tenets will be painful.”<sup>491</sup>

In the meantime, Ambassador Kirk had resigned on March 5, 1946, in part for personal reasons as he had spoken for months with close friends of his wish to retire.<sup>492</sup> A February 9 letter to Bernard Berenson demonstrated Ambassador Kirk’s frustration: “As regards the (illegible) from Russia, I regret I can’t tell you off-hand what can be done....I am glad that you are well - I am not.”<sup>493</sup> The British held the majority of high-ranking military positions in Caserta and Kirk was overshadowed in Rome by Admiral Stone of the Allied Commission. The December 30, 1946, inspection report of the embassy noted:

The Inspector visited Rome in April 1945, as a member of a Survey Group. At that time he found Ambassador Kirk depressed and dissatisfied, and in no mood to inspire a staff with courage and discipline, in a period when circumstances were difficult in Rome, and much work was to be done. [...] The inspector is aware of Ambassador Kirk’s deteriorating spirit during the interim from April 1945 until the date of his retirement and departure on March 5, 1946.<sup>494</sup>

Kirk was a leftover from the European court society which had received a mortal blow as a result of the egalitarian social changes brought by the war. In fact, a confidential report of the House Subcommittee on Appropriations in February 1946 criticized the career diplomats, including Kirk (and Ambassador Jefferson Caffery in Paris) for the importance they placed

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<sup>490</sup> Ventura to Interior Ministry, September 4, 1946, NARA, RG 84, Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, General Records, Box 105.

<sup>491</sup> Admiral Stone Political Report to Allied Advisory Council, August 1946, NARA, RG 84, Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, General Records, Box 105.

<sup>492</sup> C.L. Sulzberger, “Kirk Reported Out as Envoy to Italy”, *New York Times*, March 12, 1946, p. 10.

<sup>493</sup> Kirk to Berenson, February 9, 1946, Bernard and Mary Berenson Papers.

<sup>494</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, January 1947.

upon contacts in the aristocratic diplomatic social life.<sup>495</sup> Kirk made full use of the autonomy given to ambassadors to run their missions as they saw fit. His relationships with embassy staff explain in part his lack of efficacy despite his vast network of contacts among the Roman aristocracy and knowledge of Italy. According to Homer Byington III, the ambassador did not fully trust any of his subordinates with the exception of two men: Carmel Offie, a homosexual, identified as the ambassador's "all powerful intimate" and Second Secretary John L. Goshie.<sup>496</sup> The Foreign Service inspection report of December 30, 1946, confirms that Goshie's actions caused morale at the embassy to plummet; he had sold a considerable quantity of cigarettes on the black market, broke State Department rules by attempting to procure Japanese embassy property, and arranged to buy lire from an Italian at rates more favorable than those officially established.<sup>497</sup>

## **2.7 Freemasonry in Naples and the Crisis of the Parri Government**

The close ties between freemason groups and public affairs in Naples were documented in two reports written by Captain Gilbert Meldrum of the Counter Intelligence Corps in the summer of 1945. The first, dated June 21, was forwarded by Consul General Brandt to Ambassador Kirk.<sup>498</sup> In addition to describing Prime Minister Parri as "virtually unknown to the people of the Naples area", Meldrum highlighted the journalistic activities of Amedeo Pistolese. The Piscitelli family in the report refers to Clemente Piscitelli, a nationalist lawyer born in 1888 in Cervino (Caserta) who joined the Fascist Party in January 1923 and was

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<sup>495</sup> "Career Type Outmoded: Businessmen-Diplomats Preferred", *Lubbock Morning Avalanche*, Texas, February 9, 1946, p. 6.

<sup>496</sup> See: H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 49. Offie, arrested in 1943 for lewd acts in a public bathroom in Lafayette Park in Washington D.C., was protected by Secretary of State Cordell Hull and his assistant James Dunn. Goshie was also Kirk's assistant on the U.S. delegation to the Allied Advisory Council.

<sup>497</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, January 1947.

<sup>498</sup> Monthly Counterintelligence Report of June 21, 1945 by Gilbert Meldrum, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 139.

identified as one of the powerful men behind the advent of fascism in the Naples area.<sup>499</sup> It is unclear who conducted the telephone intercepts mentioned in the document.

Il Paese is now a regularly authorized daily paper. [...] This newspaper has a number of rather suspicious characteristics. Its director Amedeo PISTOLESE, is the head of the Italian Democratic Party. The newspaper makes no attempt to publicize the principles of this party but is openly monarchist. The newspaper has no definite plan of action but to criticize all the other parties and the present democratic institutions in Italy, such as the Committee of National Liberation. Telephone intercepts indicate that PISTOLESE is taking journalistic orders from the SPASIANO - LABRIOLA - BENCIVENGA group of masons of which he is a member. Furthermore the paper is reportedly financed by the Piscitelli family with whom PISTOLESE has long had business contacts.

Meldrum's second report dated July 20 (See: Appendix A), was sent by Brandt to Secretary of States Byrnes. The "Chinigo" mentioned was Michael Chinigo, an Albanian-born American citizen who had covered the Sicily and Anzio landings as a reporter for William Randolph Hearst's *International News Service*.<sup>500</sup> Meldrum commended Pistolese for organizing the Italian Democratic Party (IDP) which he lauded as a "strong conservative political force". The IDP disintegrated in September 1946 and its leadership merged with the Liberal and Monarchist parties in the Naples area for the local elections of the following November. A liberal reformer in the Nineteenth Century sense, Nitti had long identified the semi-feudal agricultural activity as a major reason for Southern Italy's lack of social and economic development. As a remedy he proposed the industrialization of Naples; as prime minister in 1919, his government had emanated the Visocchi Decree which had given Italian prefects the power to assign uncultivated lands to tenant farmers many of whom were World War I veterans.

By the autumn of 1945, just a few months after the liberation of Italy, Prime Minister Ferruccio Parri's government had not been able to establish public order. On November 5,

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<sup>499</sup> M. Bernabei, *Fascismo e nazionalismo in Campania (1919-1925)*, Rome, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1975, p. 65. Piscitelli was elected to the Senate of the Republic on April 18, 1948.

<sup>500</sup> "Michael Chinigo, 66, Dead; A Foreign Correspondent", *New York Times*, October 12, 1974, p 34. Chinigo died from a self-inflicted bullet wound on October 11, 1974.

Ambassador Kirk described a wave of political violence overtaking Southern Italy with the sacking of several left-wing party headquarters and the retaliatory razing of the Uomo Qualunque office in Taranto.<sup>501</sup> The Italo-American A.P. Giannini, the founder of Bank of America, criticized Prime Minister Parri and expressed his hopes for an Italian government composed of men with proven administrative experience, specifically mentioning the elderly pre-fascist Prime Ministers Francesco Saverio Nitti and Vittorio Emanuele Orlando. Giannini had visited Italy in October on an inspection tour of Italian financial institutions and had met with the Pope on October 27. Italy's obvious need of foreign investment to begin the long process of reconstruction gave additional weight to the banker's words.

Amidst rumors of a government crisis, American military officers in Italy followed developments through Renato Morelli of the Liberal Party who claimed that Benedetto Croce had ordered the Liberal parliamentarians to drop their support for Parri in a meeting held on November 18 with Morelli, Leone Cattani, and Storeri.<sup>502</sup> The liberals resented the socialist leader Pietro Nenni's authority in the government as high commissioner for the purge of fascist criminals and feared the growing communist strength that had been unleashed since the liberation of Northern Italy in late April.

Pressure against the Parri government also came from the House of Savoy. Prince Umberto feared for the future of the monarchy as more time passed under the CLN government:

A source (Prof. Emilio Patrissi) close to Prince UMBERTO reports that the prince is particularly desirous of breaking up the CLN monopoly on the government and is anxious that outside parties and independent political men be given the opportunity to participate [...] Same source reports that yesterday (November 19) he interviewed ORLANDO and found that the former Prime Minister is now almost willing to accept the charge to form a new ministry. ORLANDO requested a secret interview with Admiral Stone. He expects to call on the Admiral at 16:30 today. PATRISSI could offer no definite proof but he firmly believes that in the interview between Admiral Stone and F.S. NITTI

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<sup>501</sup> Kirk to Byrnes, November 5, 1945, NARA, RG 84, Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, General Records, Box 82A.

<sup>502</sup> Captain Bruno to General Brady, November 20, 1945, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 139.

last Friday, the Admiral gave NITTI a great deal of encouragement. PATRISSI sponsored the above-mentioned meeting in the hope that if the Admiral gives ORLANDO any encouragement at all, the latter will place himself completely at the disposition of the political parties.<sup>503</sup>

The supremacy of Admiral Stone of the Allied Commission was evident in the crisis of the Parri government. Paying heed to A.P. Giannini's comments, Stone's meetings with the elderly rivals Nitti and Orlando reflected a desire to identify an experienced candidate for prime minister whose reputation had not been heavily compromised by a close relationship to the Fascist regime in order to avoid aiding communist propaganda and a scandal in the American press. Qualified men were difficult to find given that 23 years had passed since the formation of Mussolini's first government.<sup>504</sup> Stone gave Nitti "a great deal of encouragement" despite the mysterious nature of the latter's freemason backers. The former prime minister had close ties with the brothers Mario and Pio Perrone of the Ansaldo Corporation based in Genoa. Furthermore, Stone's former employer, the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation, "did move quickly into the European and Italian markets as soon as the fighting ceased" suggesting that "American corporations would seek monopoly control as their price for entry into the Italian market, a practice the State Department strenuously opposed."<sup>505</sup> It is likely that Stone saw Nitti as a pliable politician for his future business endeavors.

The British government expressed its disapproval of the crisis in a letter to Admiral Stone on November 20:

H.M. Government deprecates any serious government crisis at this moment and thinks that any person or party which creates a serious situation now, must shoulder a grave responsibility for any economic and political difficulties which may arise during this coming winter. The British Government hope that the unity of the government can be maintained until the elections though of course they are not opposed to

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<sup>503</sup> Ibid.

<sup>504</sup> Vittorio Emanuele Orlando had resigned from the Chamber of Deputies in 1925. He later wrote a letter of praise to Mussolini's regarding the 1935 invasion of Ethiopia.

<sup>505</sup> J.E. Miller, *The United States and Italy 1940-1950: The Politics and Diplomacy of Stabilization*, p. 178.

changes provided they are effected without undue delay and without dislocation of the machinery of government.<sup>506</sup>

As the situation became clearer, the Truman administration expressed a similar opinion to Stone on November 24.

The Government of the United States presumes that those political parties involved in the crisis are prepared to accept the consequences of their action, both as regards Italy's position abroad and the domestic situation. It is further presumed that the position of the several parties in the present crisis has not been lightly assumed. In the view of the United States Government the gravity of the difficulties besetting Italy is sufficiently apparent to require the complete subordination of party aims to the national interest of all Italian political parties whether of the Center, Left or Right. Until the elections can be held in Italy, the Government of the United States has consistently maintained that any Italian government should be as broadly representative as may be possible.<sup>507</sup>

Stone had already met with Nitti on November 16, two day prior to Croce's ordering of the crisis, according to Morelli's testimony. On November 20, the admiral was scheduled to meet with Orlando.<sup>508</sup> In the end Alcide De Gasperi emerged as the new prime minister. It is unclear what role was played by Stone beyond meeting with Nitti and Orlando and why neither regained the role of prime minister although various sources in the following years indicated that Nitti strongly desired the position.

Homer M. Byington Jr. was another American favorable to Nitti operating in the Naples area from August 1945 until the autumn of 1946. Nitti drew his political strength from the large business owners who had been compromised by fascism. As previously noted, Byington's father had been consul general in Naples from 1920-1929 and had known and sailed with nearly all the leading businessmen in the city in his youth from 1898 to 1908. The

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<sup>506</sup> British Memo to Admiral Stone, November 20, 1945, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 139.

<sup>507</sup> Key to Stone, November 24, 1945, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 139.

<sup>508</sup> The Nuremberg Trials began on November 20, 1945 and serve as a clear contrast between the Allied approach to former enemies Germany and Italy at this time.

younger Byington's stock was on the rise after a successful performance in wartime Washington; in particular Joseph Grew, the conservative Undersecretary of State "thought very highly of him".<sup>509</sup> Indeed in March 1945, Byington was promoted to the rank of first secretary of the Rome embassy: a major step in the direction of eventually becoming an ambassador. Due to his work at the UN Conference in San Francisco Byington did not immediately report to Rome; the first document indicating his presence in Caserta is dated August 9. Shortly after his arrival at the port of Naples, Byington was informed by Carmel Offie, whom he did not know, that Ambassador Kirk wanted him to serve as Deputy Political Advisor to Field Marshal Harold Alexander, Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean.<sup>510</sup> Kirk's utilization of Offie for informal personnel management did not follow the Foreign Service's chain of command. This unorthodox operating method made Byington uncomfortable and he reported immediately to Embassy Counselor David Key in Rome to clarify his orders; Key told him that he had no choice but to report to Offie who was Kirk's "fixer and all-powerful intimate."<sup>511</sup> Again, Kirk did not like dealing with the military and had stopped traveling to Caserta.

In September 1945, Byington moved into the Villa Lauro in Posillipo which had been requisitioned by the Allies for the use of the political advisor and his staff. Soon thereafter he had the privilege of using a motor yacht reserved for General John C.H. Lee which had previously belonged to the King of Italy and was staffed by the Italian Navy.<sup>512</sup> This opulent lifestyle rankled Consul General Brandt, whom in spite of his seniority in the Foreign Service,

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<sup>509</sup> See: H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 32.

<sup>510</sup> See H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, pp. 38-40. The FSO Roy Melbourne confirms that the State Department's office in Caserta was run by Offie and Frederick Reinhardt. See R. Melbourne, *Conflict and Crises: A Foreign Service Story*, University Press of America, Lanham, Maryland, 1999, p. 92.

<sup>511</sup> Ibid.

<sup>512</sup> In 1946, the American Lee had replaced the British general Sir William Duthie Morgan as Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean. Lee was criticized by the journalist Robert Ruark who claimed that the general and his staff enjoyed "lavish living" while the enlisted men were ill-housed, ill-fed, and generally mistreated. See: "Court House Lee Probe Closed Out" *Cornell Daily Sun*, October 4, 1947, Lee was officially absolved by the Supreme Commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower after the report by Inspecting General Ira.T. Wyche. Lee resigned shortly thereafter.

lived in the less prestigious chalet at the Villa Gallotti where Byington had stayed as a vice-consul in the 1930s.<sup>513</sup>

As a result of his childhood in England, Byington was particularly adept at resolving differences between the British and American officials in Caserta.<sup>514</sup> In particular, he developed a close relationship with his British counterpart, the Political Advisor Ian MacPherson, with whom he sought to obtain a sensitive approach to questions that would affect Italy's political future.<sup>515</sup> He continued to believe that the war had been caused by miscalculation of the major European powers and had led to the greater danger of a communist takeover of Western Europe. In March 1946, Byington was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his contribution to the Allied cause in Italy.

The Masonic network of General Bencivenga and Francesco Saverio Nitti continued to operate throughout 1946. An American military intelligence report on far right and monarchical organizations in Italy stated: "Partito della Giovane Italia", headed by General MARCHI and comprising a group of young people with Right Wing tendencies, was founded recently under the auspices of Francesco NITTI, Roberto BENCIVENGA, and Tito ZANIBONI (a former Right Wing Socialist). The organization has its headquarters on the Via Due Macelli in Rome and publishes the periodical Dio e Popolo.<sup>516</sup>

On July 31, 1947, U.S. Consul in Naples Frederick Jandrey recounted a recent conversation with Carlo Di Luca, a shipping agent of long standing in Naples and long time friend of Nitti, who had helped the latter escape from Italy in the early years of fascism. After traveling to Rome to attend the funeral of Nitti's son, Di Luca came away with the impression that "Nitti's one aspiration is to be President of the Council of Ministers and that as he could not occupy

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<sup>513</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 43.

<sup>514</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 41.

<sup>515</sup> Ibid.

<sup>516</sup> Acheson to Rome Embassy, March 10, 1947, NARA, RG 84, U.S. Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1954, Box 18.

this position under a government of the Right or Center, he would be willing to make the necessary concessions to the left in order to realize his ambition.”<sup>517</sup>

## **2.8 Monarchy or Republic? June 2, 1946**

On January 30, 1946, Ambassador Kirk forwarded an intelligence report chronicling the growth of right wing organizations in Italy to Secretary of State Byrnes. The report was signed by the American Brigadier General George S. Smith, the senior intelligence officer at AFHQ Caserta who noted that

there were however in ITALY powerful interests particularly those of the important industrialists which felt themselves threatened by the socialistic trend indicated by the program and the activities of the leading parties of the CLN, and after the liberation of ITALY this opposition was manifested in a “Sitting on the fence policy”; efforts were made to discredit the work of the CLN and to appeal to capitalist elements in Britain and USA in the name of law and order.

During the past four months there have been manifestations of a bolder and more organized plan of action by extreme Right Wing and neo-Fascist groups. These groups have exploited the disorganised conditions which followed the liberation and have taken advantage of the considerably diminished number of Allied troops in ITALY and have exploited the prevalent belief that the Allies would prefer some Right Wing Monarchical form of Government.

With Kirk’s resignation in March 1946, the embassy was entrusted to Chargé d’Affaires David McKendree Key II who had already served as second secretary in Rome in 1940-1941.<sup>518</sup> On March 18, the Lieutenant General of the Realm and heir to the throne Prince

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<sup>517</sup> Jandrey to Rome Embassy, July 31, 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

<sup>518</sup> His family had a long history of public service, Key was a descendant of David McKendree Key, a Democratic senator from Tennessee from 1875 to 1877 and Postmaster General of the United States in the administration of Rutherford B. Hayes. Key was born in Tokyo in 1900 where his father served as a member of the Merchant Marine. He studied at the prestigious Groton School before enlisting in the U.S. Marines toward the end of the First World War. After the war, he graduated from Harvard, studied at Cambridge University, and prepared for a diplomatic career at Georgetown. Starting in 1925 he worked in Antwerp, Berlin, London, and Ottawa.

Umberto accepted that the future of the monarchy would be put to a popular referendum which was scheduled on June 2.

Monarchies in Soviet occupied Bulgaria (September 1944) and Hungary (February 1946) had fallen in favor of “people’s republics”. The Foreign Service officers in Italy were well-informed on life beyond the Iron Curtain in the single party Soviet police states: throughout 1945 their colleagues in Eastern Europe had repeatedly reported to Washington on the wave of political repression. Furthermore, in nearby Greece, civil war broke out at the end of March 1946 between British backed monarchists and communist elements supported by Marshal Tito. The war was perceived by conservative diplomats as an analogous situation to the impending institution referendum of June 2.

Given these developments it is not surprising that the two Foreign Service officers with the most experience in Italy, Homer Byington Jr. and Alexander Kirk, were both favorable to the monarchical structure as an anticommunist bastion. This confirms that the Italian far-right activists, as reported by General Smith the previous January, were correct in their belief that at least some aspects of the Allied authorities were favorable to the monarchy’s survival and is in contrast to the historian James Miller’s observation regarding the House of Savoy, namely that “the Americans never had much sympathy for either the institution or for its occupants”<sup>519</sup> at the time it was impossible to know that Prime Minister De Gasperi would prove to be a long-term solution. Furthermore, the Anglophiles Kirk and Byington would have been aware of the thinking of Ernest Satow (1843-1929) the British dean of diplomatic theory who viewed republics as vulnerable to transforming into dictatorships and the moderate parliamentary monarchy structure as the best assurance of individual liberties.<sup>520</sup>

As previously noted, the Byington family had first been in contact with the House of Savoy on Umberto I’s visit to Naples in 1900, whereas Kirk had close ties with the monarchy dating

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<sup>519</sup> J. Miller, *The United States and Italy: 1940-1950: The Politics and Diplomacy of Stabilization*, pp. 189-190.

<sup>520</sup> On Satow’s views see: G. R. Berridge, M. Keens-Soper, T.G. Otte, *Diplomatic Theory from Machiavelli to Kissinger*, New York, Palgrave, 2001, p. 130.

back to the late 1920s.<sup>521</sup> Kirk hoped that King Umberto II would remain as regent until the maturity of his son Victor Emanuel Prince of Naples.<sup>522</sup> Byington who knew Umberto and Princess Maria José in the 1930s agreed with the Allied policy, seconded by Count Carlo Sforza, to put pressure on Victor Emmanuel III to resign but viewed Umberto as too heavily compromised by fascism to win the referendum.<sup>523</sup> Strangely enough, Byington preferred the Republican Sforza as regent for the young Victor Emanuel Prince of Naples and “thought it highly likely that Italian sentimentality would have produced enough votes for the boy to win the plebiscite.”<sup>524</sup> He had also absorbed the favorable attitude to the monarchy that was widespread in Naples and Southern Italy which has been described by Domenico De Napoli:

The attachment to the monarchy is a phenomenon of the people deeply rooted in the historical and cultural traditions of the Southern regions, to the point that it was diminished neither by the Fascist regime nor by the “wind from the North”. It is impossible to describe the dimension and intensity of such a vast and disinterested adherence by listing the countless political formations which sustained the legitimacy of the monarchy in these years (1946-1954).<sup>525</sup>

Byington was intimately familiar with the entire panorama of Italian history in the early Twentieth Century; he was in Naples for both the post-World War I social upheaval and the October 1922 March on Rome. Due to his pre-war consular experience in Naples he was well

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<sup>521</sup> Another later link between the Prince of Piedmont and Byington is the Italian diplomat Luca Dainelli who would serve as Umberto’s chief negotiator with the American side of the Allied occupation authority in 1944. According to HMB III, Dainelli and Byington became lifelong friends although the exact origin of their relationship is not clear. It is possible that the *New York Times* foreign correspondent Cy Sulzberger, a friend of Byington’s dating back to 1939 in Yugoslavia, served as a liaison between Dainelli and Byington in the period of 1948 when the latter was Counselor of the Rome Embassy and the former was stationed in Czechoslovakia. See: C. Sulzberger, *A Long Row of Candles: Memories & Diaries 1934-1954*, Toronto, Macmillan, 1969, p. 461.

<sup>522</sup> E. Guastone Belcredi, *La carriera: Pagine di vita diplomatica*, Catanzaro, Rubettino, 2006, p. 437.

<sup>523</sup> This was confirmed in my oral interview with Homer M. Byington III.

<sup>524</sup> H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 50.

<sup>525</sup> D. De Napoli, *Il movimento monarchico in Italia dal 1946 al 1954*, Naples, Loffredo, 1980, pp. 8-9. L’attaccamento alla Monarchia è un fenomeno popolare che affonda le radici nelle tradizioni storiche-culturali delle regioni meridionali, al punto da non essere sminuito dal *vento del Nord*, così come non era stato menomato dal regime fascista. E’ impossibile descrivere le dimensioni e l’intensità di una adesione così vasta e disinteressata, limitandosi ad elencare le associazioni politiche a sfondo *legittimista* che proliferano in questi anni.

aware that fascism had not merely been a historical parenthesis that enjoyed little consensus among the Italian people as many Italian antifascists declared in the United States. He knew that Italy's transition to democracy would be a long journey and prioritized social order over social justice partly for the purpose of preventing the spread of communism. Even after his retirement in February 1973 Byington "firmly believed that democracy did not work well in countries such as Spain or Italy. He felt that Mediterranean peoples, by temperament, were better served by having strong, even authoritarian, central governments."<sup>526</sup> Still, he was not favorable to a fascist rebirth as he opposed totalitarian regimes. By supporting Sforza it seems plausible that he envisioned a return to the governments under the monarchy typical of Giovanni Giolitti's pre World War I *età liberale*. Sforza and Byington were both secular and neither looked positively on the notable influence of the Catholic Church on the Christian Democrats.<sup>527</sup> Perhaps Byington's support of Sforza can also be attributed to the fact that in the aftermath of the invasion of Sicily General Eisenhower had indicated to the British authorities that Sforza was President Roosevelt's chosen leader for a new government in Southern Italy.<sup>528</sup>

### **Reports from the Field**

In the absence of political reporting from the Naples Consulate General, a brief dispatch written by Allied army officers on April 2, 1946, chronicled the return to the city of an estimated 600-700 veterans who had been released by the Soviet Union. These men "incensed by their treatment by Russians, proceeded in body to HQ Communist Party which was

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<sup>526</sup> Ibid.

<sup>527</sup> It is likely that Byington as an Italian expert in the State Department came to know the antifascists Sforza and Randolfo Pacciardi in Washington in the period from 1941 to 1943. Sforza's friends in the State Department in exile were Sumner Welles and Adolf Berle. See: M.G. Melchionni, "Dal diario del Conte Sforza: il periodo post-fascists (25 luglio 1943 - 2 febbraio 1947), in *Rivista di Studi Politici Internazionali*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (175) (July-September 1977). p. 404.

<sup>528</sup> Sforza had served as the High Commissioner for Sanctions Against Fascism from May to November 1944 under the Second Badoglio Government and the Second Bonomi Government.

wrecked and fired. Then to sub office same party and fired building.”<sup>529</sup> The Communist Party called a general strike in protest. Shortly thereafter, a detailed 24 page report produced by the Counter Intelligence Corps in Naples covered the political developments in the city for month of April.<sup>530</sup> It concluded that the monarchist support in Italy had notably weakened and cited a prominent official of monarchist persuasion in Naples who claimed that with a victory on June 2 the monarchist forces would cut Italy in two at the line of demarcation of the Garigliano River.<sup>531</sup>

Meanwhile, at the embassy, Chargé d’Affaires Key was relegated to chronicling events in the lead-up to the referendum. The real power continued to reside in the hands of Admiral Stone and the American Supreme Allied Commander General John C.H. Lee along with the latter’s political advisors. The secondary status of the embassy is confirmed by an undated seven page report entitled “The Edoardo COSTA Affair” which describes a series of meetings held in May 1946 between Allied military authorities and Edoardo Costa: an exponent of a clandestine organization of monarchist and neofascist persuasion that was planning a *coup d’état* to preserve the monarchy. (For report see Appendix B) Costa, born in 1896 in Tunis had been the Secretary of the Fascist Party in Milan.<sup>532</sup> The references made to the difference of opinions between the British and Americans on the person of Costa and the comments on the unsatisfactory work of the Allied Commission indicate that the report originated from Supreme Allied Headquarters in Caserta where Byington was serving as Political Advisor to Supreme Allied Commander General Lee. At each stage of the developments the results were

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<sup>529</sup> Allied Military Government district 3 to AFHQ Caserta, April 3, 1946, NARA, RG 84, Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, General Records 1946, Box 105.

<sup>530</sup> It is likely that one of the officers responsible for the report was Gilbert S. Meldrum, the chief of CIC in Naples. As noted previously, Brandt had asked permission from the embassy in February, 1946 to have Meldrum write political reports. As a rule of thumb consular reporting was not considered important by the Embassy; in April Brandt skipped over the Embassy, making an urgent request to Secretary of State Byrnes for an officer to “study the political situation in Southern Italy in order to write reports for the embassy.”

<sup>531</sup> Counterintelligence Report for April 1946, NARA RG 84 Records of the Political advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, General Records 1946, Box 105.

<sup>532</sup> See: D. Sorrenti, *Il neofascismo nell’Italia Meridionale tra eversione e legalità*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Calabria, 2017, p. 59.

relayed to the British embassy and to First Secretary John Wesley Jones who headed the political section in Via Veneto. It is highly likely that it was Byington who kept the U.S. embassy informed of the latest developments.<sup>533</sup>

The “Contini” described in the report is Alessandro Contini Bonacossi, born in 1914 and known as “Sandrino” to differentiate himself from his uncle and namesake, the wealthy international art dealer Alessandro Contini Bonacossi.<sup>534</sup> The younger Contini remained a crucial source of information for Byington until the latter returned to Washington in May 1950.<sup>535</sup> The connection to Contini is another indication that Byington had sources of information in Italian masonic lodges, although he was not personally active in freemasonry.<sup>536</sup>

The report concludes by noting that Costa was in Milan on March 23 for the meeting of General Bencivenga with the Masons of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.<sup>537</sup> At the meeting Giuseppe Spataro “stated that President TRUMAN has sent a personally signed letter to the leaders of the Masonic group urging them to continue with their efforts and not to permit the infiltration of Communistic elements who are at the service of materialism.”<sup>538</sup> General Bencivenga was identified as one of the founders of the Clandestine Anticommunist Army (ECA) that was created ahead of the referendum, around March and April 1946 as

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<sup>533</sup> See: ADST interview, Joseph N. Greene Jr. with Charles Stuart Kennedy, March 12, 1993. In 1946, Greene, who was officially under the command of the U.S. Navy reported to Byington in Caserta who reported relevant information to the embassy.

<sup>534</sup> The elder Contini, born in 1878 in Ancona, was named to the Italian Senate by Victor Emanuel III in 1939. Contini owned the Villa Contini Bonacossi in Florence which made him a neighbor of the King when the latter visited the nearby Palazzina Reale adjacent to the Santa Maria Novella train station.

<sup>535</sup> That “Sandrino” Contini-Bonacossi was a close contact of Homer Byington is confirmed in H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, pp. 53-54. Contini died in mysterious circumstances, an apparent suicide in Washington D.C. in 1975.

<sup>536</sup> A 1949 letter to the Rome embassy from the Naples Consulate also indicates that freemason elements reached out to Byington. See: p. 188.

<sup>537</sup> In December 1946 Bencivenga was identified as one of the founders of the far right “Partito della Giovane Italia” along with Francesco Nitti and Tito Zaniboni as noted on p. 147.

<sup>538</sup> Ibid. Spataro, born in 1897, was a Christian Democrat elected several times to the Chamber of Deputies from Abruzzo and also served as Interior Minister in the short-lived Tambroni government from March to July 1960.

alluded to by Costa who was released from police custody because he was candidate for the Uomo Qualunque Party in the June 2 elections with the understanding that he would be rearrested later.<sup>539</sup>

It is interesting that the British were impressed by Costa's "realistic approach" given that according to the historian James Miller the British "had long since abandoned their support of the House of Savoy".<sup>540</sup> On the other hand the American authorities in Caserta thought Costa was "swayed by a feeling of fanaticism and is 100% fascist" and thus constituted a serious security threat. In any event it seems plausible that elements of Costa's "clandestine resistance movement" eventually became part of the Operation Gladio network.

In Naples, where the monarchy had obtained 80% of the vote in the referendum, the birth of the Republic caused disillusionment and heightened tensions between factions on opposite sides of the political spectrum. In addition to widespread genuine emotional attachment to the House of Savoy in the city, the large landowners had supported the monarchy with an eye toward thwarting agrarian reform desired by the Italian Communist Party. A June 16 report by the British ambassador to Italy Sir Noel Charles demonstrated the seriousness of the situation.

Circumstances of the King's departure have however undoubtedly aggravated the tension [...] The chief danger of civil war is the action which Marshal Tito may make up his mind to take in Venezia Giulia if the present meeting of the Council goes against him. The Italians will certainly be prepared to take up spades and shovel if there is a coup in Trieste and M. Molotov may possibly be preparing a case against "fascists" if and when such a coup takes place, in order to excuse the action of communist agents who are likely to take sympathetic action in support of the new-born republic against "reactionaries".<sup>541</sup>

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<sup>539</sup> See: D. Sorrenti, *Il neofascism nell'Italia Meridionale tra eversione e legalità*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Calabria, 2017, p. 32. Bencivenga was elected to the Constituent Assembly as a member of the conservative monarchist National Block of Liberty (BLN) before joining the Uomo Qualunque Party in 1947.

<sup>540</sup> J. Miller, *The United States and Italy: 1940-1950: The Politics and Diplomacy of Stabilization*, p. 189.

<sup>541</sup> Summary Report by Sir Noel Charles, June 16, 1946, NARA RG 84 Records of the Political advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, General Records 1946, Box 105.

On June 10, Frederick Jandrey, American Consul in Naples, reported on a lunch held at the house of the Prince Giambattista Caracciolo-Carafa two days prior.<sup>542</sup> (See Appendix C for report) As previously noted, the prince was a close friend of Byington dating back to the 1930s whom Jandrey came to know in 1938.<sup>543</sup> It must be remembered that Foreign Service officers were expected to meet with influential local figures and Caracciolo was a major landowner in Puglia and Lazio; that the prince was an occasional contact for Jandrey is evidenced by the fact that the latter was not sure of his interlocutor's exact age and twice misspelled his surname. Caracciolo's anger toward the United States was due to the refusal by the American authorities to adopt a public position in favor of the monarchy prior to the referendum.

It is striking that Caracciolo's wife, reflecting her husband's opinion, stated that Southern Italy should have a form of autonomy similar to that campaigned for by Sicilian separatists such as Prince Giovanni Alliata di Montereale. As we will see, in the late 1940s, Alliata campaigned in Naples with the National Monarchist Party (PNM) which was founded by Alfredo Covelli in 1946. Stunningly, Jandrey suggested to Caracciolo that the monarchists lacked a leader to launch a successful reactionary coup in Southern Italy, but stopped short of openly endorsing the monarchist cause. The "Edoardo Costa report" documents the American refusal to countenance what was perceived as a neofascist coup preceding the June 2 referendum and reflects Miller's statement that the "two Allied powers had simply to resist pressure from the right to intervene". Nevertheless, it is telling that Caracciolo had not been arrested given his evident role as an organizer of an armed insurrection against the state after the referendum.<sup>544</sup> Evidently, his activities had some form of institutional cover, likely from

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<sup>542</sup> Jandrey to Key, June 10, 1946, NARA, RG 84, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 6.

<sup>543</sup> Jandrey was also a friend of the engineer Edwin Cerio who had been the Mayor of Capri from 1920 to 1923.

<sup>544</sup> A similar episode occurred in May 1951 when Caracciolo-Carafa and three others were tried and absolved of attempted breaking and entering the villa of the author Curzio Malaparte in Capri with the intent to cause bodily harm to Malaparte. It seems evident that the key witness against the defendants was intimidated by the prince's political and social power. On this case see: E.R. Suckert, *Malaparte, 1950-1951. Fuoco umido, la carne umana, l'altra coscienza*, Volume 9, Florence, Ponte alle Grazie, 1994, pp. 650-52, 716-718, 722-727.

high Allied officials; it is likely that Caracciolo was in close contact with his long-time friend Byington who lived nearby at the Villa Lauro. This institutional cover of revanchist monarchist activity stands in contrast to the established narrative that the Americans in Italy simply let events take their course in the days following the referendum. The historian Guido Formigoni notes: “In this context, what stands out is the completely discreet behavior of the Allied authorities, even when confronted with various pressures from the monarchist area.”<sup>545</sup> Throughout his long career Byington never was responsible for a highly publicized gaffe. Caracciolo was elected to the Naples City Council in the local elections of November 10, 1946.

On June 20, U.S. Consul in Naples William Flournoy summarized the civil disorder in the city following the referendum.<sup>546</sup> See Appendix D for document) “Lucifero” as described was Roberto Lucifero d’Aprigliano, a major landowner in the area of Catanzaro elected in 1946 to the Constituent Assembly from the National Block of Liberty (BLN). Lucifero was a cousin, not the brother, of Falcone Lucifero who had been nominated the Minister of the Royal House in June 1944 by Prince Umberto di Savoia. “Avvocato Rivetti” was the lawyer Salvatore Rivetti who received 5,852 votes on the PNM ticket in the April 18, 1948, elections but was not elected to Parliament.

Further evidence of monarchist anger toward the Allies in Naples is found in a July 1, 1946, political report by the U.S. Army’s Counter Intelligence Corps. “Many Italians expressed bitter disappointment over the apparent tolerance of the Republican victory by the Anglo-American officials. These Southern Italians, all Monarchist, feel that America and England

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<sup>545</sup> See: G. Formigoni, *Storia d’Italia nella guerra fredda (1943-1978)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2016, p. 82. “Alla fine il re parti per l’esilio solo il 13 giugno. In questo quadro, spiccò un comportamento ormai del tutto riservato delle autorità alleate, anche a fronte di varie pressioni degli ambienti monarchici...”

<sup>546</sup> Flournoy to Key, June 20, 1946, NARA, RG 84, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 6. For a detailed account of the violent incidents in Naples in the days following the June 2, 1946 referendum. See: A. Ghirelli, *Napoli dalla guerra a Bassolino 1943-1998*, pp 45-46. William Blue of the Naples Consulate General was present for the manifestations of June 11 in Via Medina.

could have intervened and kept Italy from going left politically.”<sup>547</sup> Thus, the conservative monarchists in Southern Italy established a tradition of asking for American intervention for their own domestic political problems. In early September the Naples Prefect Ventura chronicled the transition of former fascist elements to the monarchist party in Capri:

Numerous personalities of the ceased Fascist regime, or rather belonging to the Monarchist Movement, have property and reside on the island for many months each year. Among those noted are Curzio Suckert Malaparte, Alessandro Alvisi, ex-consul in Silesia and judge of the Special Tribunal; Antonio Lezza, journalist, publicist, and propagandist of the former regime; Admiral Ferdinando Casardi, the president of the local monarchist section; Count Paolo Gaetani D’Aragona, former president of the Naples Tennis Club and known monarchist mover; and Count Germano Ripandelli, former fascist mayor of Capri among others.<sup>548</sup>

Therefore, in the prefect’s judgment, the change in loyalty from the Fascist Party to the monarchist movement by important military, administrative, political, and cultural figures was evident and required no further explanation. The monarchist activists attempted to exploit the widespread sympathy for the deposed institution for their own political ends such as opposition to agrarian reform. It is important to note that this was the cultural and political milieu of the upper class Neapolitan society in which the American consuls in the city participated to varying degrees and, as we will see, remained unaltered through the 1970s.

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<sup>547</sup> Counterintelligence Report by Gilbert Meldrum, July 1, 1946, NARA, RG 84, U.S. Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 5.

<sup>548</sup> Ministero dell’Interno, Direzione generale di Pubblica Sicurezza – Divisione Affari generali e riservati 1944-1946, B. 46, f. Partito fascista repubblicano Napoli. Nell’isola [...] hanno proprietà, e vi dimorano molti mesi dell’anno numerose personalità del cessato regime fascista, ovvero appartenenti al Movimento Monarchico. Fra coloro rivelaasi: Curzio Suckert Malaparte, Alessandro Alvisi - l’ex console della Silizia e Giudice del Tribunale speciale, Antonio Lezza giornalista pubblicista e propagandista del cessato regime - l’ammiraglio Ferdinando Casardi il presidente della locale sezione monarchica - il conte Paolo Gaetani D’Aragona, ex presidente del tennis club di Napoli, noto elemento monarchico e il conte Germano Ripandelli, ex podestà di Capri fra altri.

## Allied Requisition Policy

As 1946 wore on the extensive requisition of housing in Italy by the Allied occupation authorities stirred resentment in the local population. On June 14, the British brigadier general M.S. Lush of the Allied Commission highlighted the notable increase in complaints from Italian citizens and the Italian government due to the number of hotels requisitioned by the Allies in Italy.<sup>549</sup> Given that the war in Europe had ended more than a year before, Lush believed that military necessities must be subordinated to civil needs and remarked that “military necessity is often confused with what is convenient for the military” and hoped to improve the situation through the creation of an organization which would judge requisitions on a case by case basis. On August 31, Admiral Stone communicated to De Gasperi his decision to order Allied military officials to collaborate with Italian mayors and the *genio militare* to reduce housing for Allied troops to the necessary minimum.<sup>550</sup> Stone attributed the lack of progress on the issue to the Italian administration which was slowed by a lack of qualified personnel and insufficient funds for the payment of salaries. In light of this situation Stone repeated that he would not take any other action until the Italian administrative situation changed.

Two weeks later, Homer Byington in Caserta proposed the creation of a fact finding board on requisition which would be staffed by British and American embassy personnel.<sup>551</sup> The British embassy chose not to support the proposal due to a lack of available personnel whereas the American embassy did not see its practicality; First Secretary Robert Coe observed that the creation of such a board would be pointless given that the “final decision on military requisitions will be kept by the Military Authorities for themselves.”<sup>552</sup>

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<sup>549</sup> Lush to Allied Force Headquarters, June 14, 1946, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 174.

<sup>550</sup> Stone to De Gasperi, August 31, 1946, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 174.

<sup>551</sup> Byington to Goshie, September 16, 1946, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 174.

<sup>552</sup> Coe to Malcolm, September 21, 1946, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 174.

On October 14, Renato Prunas, the General Secretary of the Italian Foreign Ministry indicated that in Naples the Allied requisitions amounted to 4475 apartments, comprising more than 20,000 rooms while in Rome there were 33 hotels with 3500 beds under Allied administration.<sup>553</sup> Given the thousands of homeless people in the area, the public outcry against requisition was fanned by newspapers and threatened the credibility of Prime Minister De Gasperi in the months leading up to the important local elections.

### **Freedom of the Press and Local Elections**

In the second half of 1946 rumors swirled throughout Italy that Marshal Tito was plotting a communist *putsch* in Trieste. Italian newspapers of the political right were hostile to Yugoslavia and criticized the Allies for not taking a stronger stand against Tito. The Allied command in Caserta was greatly irritated by this media coverage. On September 25, Political Advisor Byington attempted to dissuade the military authorities from presenting their concerns to Prime Minister De Gasperi by noting that freedom of the press was “one of the big contributions which the Allies have succeeded in bringing to Italy [...] If such strong action as a protest to the Italian Prime Minister is considered desirable in this case, how extraordinary would it seem that more firm action is not taken toward attacks in the pro-Slav press.”<sup>554</sup>

The heightening tension between the political extremes in Italy was a microcosm of the nascent transnational ideological struggle that became the Cold War. On October 9, Rome suffered its most significant riot of the postwar period when 20,000 demonstrators assaulted the Viminal palace to protest the firing of workers on public projects. On October 31, Byington wrote to General Jaynes regarding the security of American military installations in Italy during political manifestations, confirming that both the embassy and the State Department were contrary to lodging a complaint with the Italian government for its incapacity to manage the strikes and labor union agitations.

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<sup>553</sup> Prunas to Key, October 14, 1946 RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 174.

<sup>554</sup> Byington to AFHQ Caserta, September 25, 1946, NARA, RG 84, Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, General Records 1946, Box 117.

We have every reason to believe that the Italian government is worried by the labor situation in Italy as much as our government is worried by the same in the United States. In the case that the United States protested to the Italian government, it would soon be open the hypothesis that the United States had asked something to the Italian government that it could not guarantee even on its own territory. [...] I have no doubt that the communist elements would be the first to develop these situations in their propaganda.<sup>555</sup>

Byington referred to the damage wrought upon the Italian economy by the transportation strikes which resulted in a scarcity of coal. In the United States a series of strikes led to an increase in the price of goods and the passage of the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act which President Truman derided as the “slave labor bill”. The president’s veto was overridden by Congress. In the autumn of 1946, with his work more frequently in Rome, Byington leased a house on the Via Appia Antica from the Marchese Giulio Del Balzo, an Italian diplomat and brother-in-law of Renato Prunas, the Secretary General of the Italian Foreign Ministry.<sup>556</sup>

A conversation on October 30, 1946, between First Secretary John Wesley Jones and the President of the Constituent Assembly Giuseppe Saragat documents the embassy’s concern over the Pact of Unity between the Socialist and Communist parties for the forthcoming local elections. Saragat asserted that it was not possible for the socialists to develop an anticommunist program because communism

rather than being just an Italian problem, was also a European and indeed a world problem [...] the existence and strength of the PCI are facts that have to be acknowledged and dealt with. [...] Italian workers still clung stubbornly to the belief that Russia was the only country which had solved the working man’s problems. It was necessary to prove that these problems could be solved in countries with truly

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<sup>555</sup> Byington to Jaynes, October 31, 1946, NARA, RG 84, Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, General Records 1946, Box 117.

<sup>556</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 47. Del Balzo had enjoyed a privileged position in the Foreign Office in the late 1930s when he served as Chief of European and Mediterranean affairs. At the time of Italy’s entry into the war on June 10, 1940 he was the Chief of the Office of Coordination with Germany.

democratic institutions under conditions of freedom and respect for human rights.<sup>557</sup>

The results of the local elections held in the major cities of Rome, Naples, Florence, Turin, Genoa, and Livorno on November 10, 1946, worried the State Department. The PCI won the most votes of any party in Florence and Livorno and in Rome the Popular Front won 30 of 80 seats in the City Council. Shortly thereafter, on November 22, the embassy transmitted an evaluation of the Italian government to Secretary of State Byrnes which covered the month of October and weighed the impact of the controversies between the DC, PSI, and PCI on the national government. The three major parties are characterized as

strongly implanted not only in the government, but are well “dug in” in most of the social and economic strata of the nation. (In contrast to the situation in the United States, political parties in Italy have a relatively firm control over agriculture, labor, transportation, local administration and social and economic life in general). For this reason, to eliminate a major party from the Government, would be an invitation to active opposition and political-economic sabotage. This is especially true when considering the communists.<sup>558</sup>

Clearly, the idea of removing the communists from the government was up for discussion in late November. As noted by the historian James Miller, the relative lack of importance placed on Italian internal politics by the Truman administration did not have disastrous effects as the Constituent Assembly remained intact and “the political energies of the left were directed toward the twin objectives of destroying the monarchy and creating democratic political forms that would protect their freedom to organize and operate.”<sup>559</sup> This state of affairs confirms Ennio Di Nolfo’s analysis: “Certain fixed positions of the internal political situation were sufficient to satisfy the Truman administration at least until autumn of 1946 or

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<sup>557</sup> Memorandum of Conversation John Wesley Jones with Giuseppe Saragat, October 30, 1946, NARA, RG 84, U.S. Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 5.

<sup>558</sup> Rome Embassy to Byrnes, November 22, 1946, NARA, RG 84, U.S. Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 5.

<sup>559</sup> J.E. Miller, *The United States and Italy 1940-1950*, p. 184.

even until the spring of 1949.”<sup>560</sup> In 1947, the fate of Italy became more important “to the extent that it would not be controlled by a hostile power.”<sup>561</sup>

UNRRA aid to Italy had only staved off disaster and economic improvement did not seem to be on the horizon. On December 23, 1946, President Truman advised Congress that shipments abroad for UNRRA for all of 1947 could amount to \$750 million, even though there were already plans in place to close the agency. Truman acquiesced to the State Department’s insistence that this potential aid would be negotiated bilaterally. Shortly thereafter, in the first days of 1947, Prime Minister De Gasperi visited Washington and obtained \$100 million in direct aid.<sup>562</sup> Thus, the Christian Democrats became the privileged interlocutor of the United States underpinning the dependence of post-war Italian politics upon the nation’s international position.

## **2.9 The Foreign Service Act of 1946**

In the immediate post-war period, media pressure mounted on Congress to improve the Foreign Service with the hope of rendering the organization commensurate with the United States’ new status as an international superpower. As noted by the historian Graham Stuart, the *New York Herald Tribune* in particular launched a scathing criticism of the conduct of American foreign policy on November 30, 1945: “The United States cannot indefinitely leave its foreign policy to the accidental interplay of the brilliant amateur, the opinionated, eccentric, and the bureaucratic intriguer.”<sup>563</sup> Similarly, a July 1946 article in *Fortune* magazine noted that the Foreign Service’s efficiency suffered from the general historical indifference of

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<sup>560</sup> E. Di Nolfo. “Italia e Stati Uniti: Un’alleanza diseguale” *Storia delle relazioni internazionali* a. VI, n.1, 1990, p. 8.

<sup>561</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>562</sup> De Gasperi’s visit to Washington in January 1947 has been subject to countless analyses. See: J. L. Harper, *L’America e la ricostruzione dell’Italia 1945-1948*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987, p. 221.

<sup>563</sup> G.H. Stuart, *The Department of State: A History of its Organization, Procedure and Personnel*, New York, MacMillan, 1949, p. 436.

Congress and the American public to its representation overseas as well as the lack of funding while remonstrating the service for not making any preparations for World War II.<sup>564</sup>

As a result of the disbandment of the OSS, OWI, and other wartime agencies, 4000 government employees were transferred to the State Department in 1946.<sup>565</sup> Hundreds of members of a new generation (mostly born after the First World War) subsequently entered the Foreign Service as a small part of the major social changes wrought by the global conflict.

Claiborne Pell, a lateral entry from the Coast Guard recalled that each member of his class had served in the military and looked enthusiastically to influence the post-war world in which the United States would have the role as a leading power for the first time.<sup>566</sup> The war was the seminal event and reference point of their young adult lives; fascism was the vanquished enemy and the miserable economic conditions in post-war Europe reinforced a new twist on the deep-rooted Wilsonian understanding of the United States as a model and bearer of democracy in the world. The new generation of Foreign Service officers, who had mostly grown up in the 1930s represented a wider cross-section of American society and on the whole, were more idealistic, egalitarian, and progressive than their older counterparts. They had no personal memory of the internecine squabbles of the Roosevelt administration; for them the former president was the wise leader who had led the Allies to victory and whose New Deal had rescued the United States from economic ruin.

The hopes of the younger generation were echoed by American public opinion and codified in the objectives of the Foreign Service Act of August 13, 1946, which sought to “insure that the officers and employees of the Foreign Service are broadly representative of the American people and are aware of and fully informed in respect to current trends in American life.”<sup>567</sup>

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<sup>564</sup> The U.S. Foreign Service” *Fortune*, July 1946, pp. 82-83.

<sup>565</sup> In the first months of 1946 Secretary of State Byrnes implemented a security screening system based on a loyalty test to process these new employees. According to *Fortune* “On May 1, 1946, the Foreign Service consisted of 55 ambassadors (36 of which were careers diplomats), 818 foreign service officers, 250 non-career vice-consuls, 3,600 other employees including office employees, typists, telephone operate etc. and 3,000 alien employees. In all there were 11,000 people on the payroll and 303 total embassies and consulates.” See: “The U.S. Foreign Service” *Fortune*, July 1946 p. 81.

<sup>566</sup> ADST interview, Claiborne Pell with Charles Stuart Kennedy, April 9, 1987.

<sup>567</sup> The Foreign Service Act of 1946 (Public law 724, 79th Congress) p.1.

The new law went in the same direction as the expansion of opportunity created by the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 (the G.I. Bill). Over time the historical entrance barriers to the Foreign Service such as class, ethnicity, religion and gender began to disappear. This new egalitarian emphasis was perceived as an attack by many long-time career diplomats epitomized by Homer M. Byington Jr. whose whole life had been "dedicated to preserving the elitist mystique of the Foreign Service"<sup>568</sup> and that the service should be a body of men, "unmatched in their professionalism, skills, training, knowledge, experience, and integrity."<sup>569</sup> According to the historian H.H. Ransom, the veteran officers were "unwilling to admit the need for the new activity or accept the new personnel as members of the State Department team".<sup>570</sup> An example of this attitude is found in the 1947 inspection report of the Rome embassy written by veteran Foreign Service officer H. Merle Cochran who stated "the American members of the staff "who have been recruited from the Army in Italy have been found far below the standard of those sent out by the Department itself."<sup>571</sup> The social and professional exclusion of new arrivals at the embassy continued well into the following decade. As recalled by the Veterans Affairs officer Peter J. Skoufis who was attached to the embassy in 1951-1952: "The Department's attitudes toward the former VA employees had been adopted by Embassy Rome. We were to be supported by the Embassy, but were viewed as essentially VA employees."<sup>572</sup>

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<sup>568</sup> H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 100.

<sup>569</sup> Interview with Homer M. Byington III.

<sup>570</sup> H.H. Ransom, *Central Intelligence and National Security*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1958, pp. 121-122.

<sup>571</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, January 1947.

<sup>572</sup> ADST interview, Peter J. Skoufis with Thomas Stern, January 27 and 29, 1992.

## Chapter Three: The Cold War, 1947-1973

### 3.1 The Truman Doctrine and Secretary of State Marshall, 1947

By 1946, the Soviet Union was moving to exercise direct control over occupied Bulgaria and Romania while Greece was embroiled in civil war with Marshal Tito aiding the communists against the British-backed monarchists. Startled by international developments, American public opinion began to shift in the second half of the year toward a more decisive hardline position against Soviet expansionism. This shift was spurred on by the media and the Republican Party's criticism of the Truman administration as soft on communism. In fact, the GOP surged to a long-awaited victory in the midterm elections of November 1946 giving the Republicans control over both legislative chambers for the first time since 1930. Elected to Congress for the first time was Richard M. Nixon of California and Joseph McCarthy from Wisconsin, both of whom were destined to play a major role in American political life in the following years.

A particularly sensitive subject in this period was the fate of Poland: a U.S. ally and a "highly charged symbol of freedom to the American government and public."<sup>573</sup> Arthur Bliss Lane, the U.S. Ambassador in Warsaw, resigned immediately following the fraudulent elections of January 19, 1947. In his 1948 tell-all memoir, *I Saw Poland Betrayed*, Lane wrote: "My mission - to ensure that "free and unfettered elections" should be held - had been a failure. To remain in Warsaw would be interpreted as tacit acquiescence in the fraudulent methods employed in the elections."<sup>574</sup> The resignation was also a protest against the perceived abandonment of Poland by the Truman administration. Secretary Byrnes's perceived weak stance on communism recalled the motivations for Ambassador Kirk's resignation in Rome in March 1946. Regarding Byrnes' tenure as Secretary of State, Lane declared that "Nothing can more effectively ruin the morale of the Department of State and of the Foreign

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<sup>573</sup> H. De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence*, p. 137.

<sup>574</sup> A.B. Lane, *I Saw Poland Betrayed*, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1948, p. 7. Lane had previously been assigned to Warsaw in 1919 where he had developed many contacts with the Polish aristocracy.

Services - as well as the very foreign policy which these bodies are required to carry out - if high officers of the government ignore the reports sent by observers abroad and withhold from them the information without which those representatives cannot properly carry out their functions.”<sup>575</sup>

Byrnes himself had resigned just two weeks before on January 7 as it had become evident that he was out of favor with Truman’s inner circle of advisors such as Clark Clifford and Admiral Leahy who had become increasingly influential in the president’s decision making process on foreign affairs.<sup>576</sup> As an indication of further Foreign Service dissatisfaction with Byrnes, Elbridge Durbrow, then serving as counselor of embassy in Moscow, wrote in his private papers on January 15:

The western mind which is trained in the school of live and let live too often believes that Soviet gestures represent substance, when in reality such Soviet gestures have usually proven to be merely smoke screen. For years these Soviet tactics have proven successful primarily because we want to forget unpleasant events and cherish the hope that ‘things somehow will get better.’ [...] Ample evidence has shown that you cannot bank good will with the Soviet leaders, they close their books every night. The one thing they respect is superior strength, physical and moral.<sup>577</sup>

George C. Marshall (1880-1959) became Truman’s third Secretary of State on January 21, 1947. A master of administration and logistics, as Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, Marshall had played a major role in the Allied victory in World War II. The folksy Virginian was well-liked by both parties, a crucial factor given the need to ratify the peace treaties. As head of the State Department his *modus operandi* of delegating authority was the polar opposite of that of his predecessor Byrnes. In the words of U.S. Army officer Carter W. Clarke, Marshall “treated those in the department as if they had the same motivation, desire, and intelligence as he did.

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<sup>575</sup> A.B. Lane, *I Saw Poland Betrayed*, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1948, p. VIII.

<sup>576</sup> D. Robertson, *Sly and Able: A Political Biography of James F. Byrnes*, New York, W.W. Norton, 1994, p. 481. Robertson also notes that Byrnes was physically exhausted after spending 350 days of his 562 day mandate overseas. Ibid. p. 489.

<sup>577</sup> NARA, RG 59, Office Files of Ambassador Elbridge Durbrow, 1934-1965, Box 1.

He did not want to tell people how to do their tasks, but assumed they knew their jobs.”<sup>578</sup> In fact, by 1947 the seasoned diplomats who had entered the Foreign Service in the 1930s were arriving at the influential level of embassy counselor.<sup>579</sup> As noted by John Harper:

The diplomats of EUR did not have a grand vision for for post-war world. For many, the world had been divided in two blocks since 1917. Even if they were obviously sensitive to American economic interests abroad, the diplomats’ concerns were of a primarily geopolitical nature: the purpose of diplomacy was to maintain the stability in areas of interest for the United States.<sup>580</sup>

Per Marshall’s request, Foreign Service officer George Kennan set up the Policy Planning Staff in April 1947 which would serve to generate independent policy analysis and make recommendations to the Secretary of State. After 12 years of President Roosevelt essentially serving as his own foreign minister and Byrnes tenure, the creation of the Policy Planning Staff was welcomed by the Foreign Service and “brought a long-overdue sense of order and pride to a war-weary group of bureaucrats.”<sup>581</sup>

Given the developments in Europe, in the first months of 1947 a sense of panic spread in American public opinion tied to the threat of communist fifth column elements operating in the United States which were protected by the freedoms guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. Government authorities also contributed to this phenomenon; in February FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover penned the article “Red Fascism in the United States Today” which appeared in

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<sup>578</sup> E. Gray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall, Soldier and Statesman*, New York, Cooper Square Press, 2000, p. 590. In addition, under Marshall’s watch the intradepartmental communications were improved and the intelligence service was removed from the geographic offices and given its own autonomy inside the State Department.

<sup>579</sup> In the month of July 1946 there were 176 alumni of Harvard, Yale and Princeton in the Foreign Service, the elite Ivy League institutions on the Atlantic Coast.

<sup>580</sup> J. L Harper, *L’America e la ricostruzione dell’Italia 1945-1948*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987, pp. 30-31.

<sup>581</sup> K. Weisbrode, *The Atlantic Century*, p. 136.

*American* magazine in which he described American communists as “Revolutionists [...] steeped in stealth, trickery, and deceit.”<sup>582</sup>

That same February the British government informed the Truman administration that it would have to terminate its aid to Greece and Turkey due to financial difficulties.<sup>583</sup> Under intense domestic pressure, President Truman announced to Congress on March 12 that the United States would aid foreign nations which faced external or internal threats from authoritarian forces. The president sought approval of \$400 million in direct aid to Greece and Turkey to help ward off Soviet aggression. This policy which became known as the Truman Doctrine was the first case of overt American anticommunist policy explicated in the post-war period and grew out of the containment idea elaborated in George Kennan’s February 1946 Long Telegram. Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson made the case to American congressmen that the spread of communist influence in Greece and Turkey would permit the Soviet Union to extend its hegemony westward into the Balkans to the East into Asia.<sup>584</sup> Truman and his circle of advisors came to believe that there could not be peace and prosperity for the United States until the problems stemming from the war were resolved. Marshall met Stalin at the Kremlin in March 1947, and came away with the impression that the Soviets were delaying a resolution on the future of Berlin in order to destabilize the economic and political situation in Europe, which combined with the withdrawal of American troops would create conditions suitable to the spread of communism.<sup>585</sup> It was now evident that the threat posed by the Soviet Union was of a long-term nature and that it required a coherent policy. Upon returning to Washington D.C., Marshall ordered Kennan to prepare an intervention for the reconstruction of Western Europe.

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<sup>582</sup> J.E. Hoover, “Red Fascism in the United States Today,” *The American Magazine*, February 1947, p. 24.

<sup>583</sup> The influence of the British presence in Italy continued to decrease after the February 10, 1947, peace treaty.

<sup>584</sup> See: D. Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 1969, p. 219.

<sup>585</sup> E. Gray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall, Soldier and Statesman*, New York, Cooper Square Press, 2000, pp. 605-606.

On April 16, Bernard Baruch, the democratic party financier from South Carolina described the tensions between the former wartime allies as a “Cold War”. Then, on May 22, Congress approved President Truman’s request for aid to Greece and Turkey. Around the same time, the U.S. Navy sent reinforcements to the Mediterranean to reassure friendly governments of its commitment to the region. On June 5, Marshall’s speech at the Harvard commencement heralded the launching of a massive aid program for to rebuild Western Europe that would take his name. Then, on July 26, Truman signed the National Security Act into law creating the CIA, the Department of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the National Security Council. On August 31, communists seized power in Hungary and finally, in September, Stalin renewed the Cominform as a response to the 16 countries that signed up for Marshall Plan aid.

### **3.2 Ambassador James Dunn, 1947-1952**

James Clement Dunn was born in 1890 in Newark, New Jersey and studied architecture in his youth. Soon after the United States entered World War I on April 6, 1917, he became an aid to the naval attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Havana.<sup>586</sup> He entered the Diplomatic Service in 1919 and, as if to repair a deficiency, zealously adopted the aristocratic mannerisms of the Anglophile diplomats. His marriage to the extraordinarily wealthy Mary Armour of Chicago meatpacking fame propelled him from a middle class upbringing suitable for a consular career to the husband of an heir of one of the Gilded Age’s great fortunes. In fact, in 1924, after just five years of service he became first secretary in Brussels under Ambassador William Phillips.<sup>587</sup> Then, in 1931, he became the Chief of the State Department’s Office of International Conferences and Chief of Protocol at the White House.

Starting with the London Economic Conference in 1933, Dunn developed a close relationship with Secretary of State Cordell Hull. On July 17, 1937, he became Hull’s Chief Advisor for Political Affairs: a position charged with supervising the geographical departments that carried out relations with foreign nations. This advancement gave him

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<sup>586</sup> M. Weil, *A Pretty good club*, p. 49.

<sup>587</sup> Dunn’s daughter, Marianna, married the Belgian, Count Guy de Baillet Latour of Brussels.

considerable power as Hull's primary source of information. Dunn came under fire from the liberal press for backing Francisco Franco's Nationalists in the Spanish Civil War, specifically for his opposition to lifting the 1937 arms embargo on Spain.<sup>588</sup> Hull, who did not clearly make the case that the Spanish policy was his own decision later clarified in his memoirs that "the policies of these assistants were my policies." Dunn was also active in Washington's diplomatic social life<sup>589</sup> and earned a reputation as the State Department's most artful bureaucratic intriguer. On December 4, 1944, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt protested against her husband's decision to nominate Dunn as Assistant Secretary of State noting that the latter was "clever enough to tell you he will do what you want' while pursuing his own agenda."<sup>590</sup>

President Truman's nomination of Dunn as Ambassador to Italy on July 25, 1946, brought a similar outcry from liberal elements as exemplified by a letter from Truman from M.E. McCallum:

I vigorously protest against the appointment of James Dunn as ambassador to Italy. You could not have chosen a worse representative to a country which is struggling toward democracy [...] It is no wonder that American prestige is at a low ebbe, and Mr. Dunn's appointment is an insult to Americans as well as to liberal Italians. If your object was to please Spellman and the Vatican, you have undoubtedly succeeded.<sup>591</sup>

The liberal opposition to the Catholic Dunn was partly based on the idea that his presence would restrict the development of a truly democratic political system in the newborn Italian

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<sup>588</sup> In 1938, Dunn was characterized by the muckraking columnist Drew Pearson as "Franco's chief friend in the State Department and the key figure in convincing Hull to make a stand on the issue." D. Pearson, "The Washington Merry-Go-Round", June 14, 1938.

<sup>589</sup> A *Washington Post* article indicates that on February 19, 1940 Dunn and his wife hosted Augusto Rosso and his wife Frances Wilkinson Rosso for lunch. Rosso was the former Italian ambassador to the United States who was then serving as Italian ambassador to the Soviet Union. Frances Rosso was a socialite from Chicago. Her brother, the businessman and diplomat Ellsworth Bunker succeeded Dunn as U.S. Ambassador to Italy for 11 months in 1952-1953. See: "Dunn's Honor the Rossos", *Washington Post*, February 20, 1940, p. 12.

<sup>590</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt to FDR, December 4, 1944, FDRI, cited in M. Beschloss, *The Conquerors: Roosevelt, Truman and the Destruction of Hitler's Germany (1941-1945)*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 2002, p. 192.

<sup>591</sup> McCallum to Truman, July 25, 1946, NARA, RG 59, Decimal File 1945-1949, James Dunn, Box 688.

Republic due to his potential ties with reactionary elements in the Vatican. Still, Dunn was well-informed on Italy dating back to the 1935 invasion of Ethiopia.<sup>592</sup>

Dunn did not immediately report to Rome due to his work as the political advisor to Secretary of State Byrnes at the Council of Foreign Ministers. In a speech at the Italian-American Labor Council in Manhattan on December 14, 1946, he declared that he would support the anti-totalitarian and pro-democratic groups within the Italian Socialist Party and Italian trade union movement as forces for a democratic Italy” and encouraged the Italian Socialist party to end its longstanding internal feud, ostensibly to render possible the formation of a strong center-left government.<sup>593</sup> He characterized Italy, with its 46 million inhabitants in the center of the Mediterranean, as a “crucial element in the rehabilitation of the European economy.”<sup>594</sup> Channeling former President Roosevelt, Dunn declared: “The fundamental basis of America’s over-all foreign policy is the firm belief that in the interdependent world of today the welfare and security of every nation is directly related to the prosperity and peace of every other nation. [...] The Four Freedoms must be promoted and defended not only in America and for the Americans, but everywhere in the world for all peoples of the world.”<sup>595</sup>

As noted by Aga-Rossi and Zaslavsky, Italy remained a unique case in Western Europe for it was the only country where the Stalinist left became more powerful than the democratic left, “resulting in a major clash between the liberal-democratic and Soviet systems that divided the

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<sup>592</sup> In fact, on December 11, 1941, Dunn received the Italian declaration of war against the United States from the ambassador Prince Colonna.

<sup>593</sup> “Democratic Italy Stressed by Dunn” *New York Times*, December 15, 1946, p. 30. The feud in the Socialist Party was temporarily brought to a close when Giuseppe Saragat left the PSI to found the social democratic Italian Workers’ Socialist Party (PSLI) on January 11. This maneuver sharpened the polarization of Italian society into two camps as a microcosm of the Cold War. For a detailed analysis of the relationship between the United States and the Italian Democratic Socialists from 1946-1952, see: G. Gabrielli, *Gli amici americani: I socialisti italiani dalla guerra fredda alle amministrative del 1952*, Manduria-Bari-Roma, Piero Lacaita, 2004.

<sup>594</sup> Ibid.

<sup>595</sup> Ibid.

nation for two generations.”<sup>596</sup> Given the international developments tied to this uncertain political situation, Truman needed a forceful presence in Italy especially considering the impending departures of American military forces and dominant personalities of the armistice regime such as Admiral Stone.<sup>597</sup>

After meeting with Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi in Washington in the first days of January 1947, Dunn assumed control of the embassy on January 29 and presented his credentials to President of the Republic Enrico De Nicola on February 7, three days before the ratification of the Italian Peace Treaty.<sup>598</sup> He committed his formidable energies to his ambassadorship with a persistence that contrasted his aloof and patrician appearance. With the end of the armistice regime, his tenure signified the return to preeminence of the professional Foreign Service and the embassy regained its pre-war position as the central node of American representation in Italy especially since Dunn established from the outset that he would be the dominant figure. As remembered by Foreign Service officer Chester Opal: “(Zellerbach) wanted to be ambassador in the worst way apparently, but James Dunn, who was the ambassador, made sure that Zellerbach, for all his money as head of the Marshall Plan, did not have equal status with him. This was a cardinal point with Dunn. Zellerbach was an administrator. He did not have ambassadorial rank or anything. He was number two in the country all the time.”<sup>599</sup> Along the same lines, the economist Vincent Checchi who worked

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<sup>596</sup> See: E. Aga-Rossi and V Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin: Il PCI e la politica estera staliniana negli archivi di Mosca*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1997, p. 10. Based on research in Russian Aga-Rossi and Zaslavsky also note that the Italian communist leaders did not envision a a model of communism substantially different from that which emerged in Eastern Europe. Ibid.

<sup>597</sup> The signing of the Italian Peace Treaty in February 1947 brought the Allied Commission’s mandate to an end. Soon after, Admiral Stone converted to Catholicism and married the Italian countess Renata Arborio Mella di Sant’Elia. Upon returning to the United States, he was elected vice-president of ITT in May and eventually became the corporation’s chief lobbyist in Europe.

<sup>598</sup> On March 12, 1946, a week after Kirk’s resignation, the journalist C.L. Sulzberger wrote in the *New York Times* that James Clement Dunn would be Kirk’s successor in Via Veneto. C.L. Sulzberger, “Kirk Reported Out as Envoy to Italy” *New York Times*, March 12, 1946, p.10.

<sup>599</sup> ADST interview, Chester Opal with G. Lewis Schmidt, January 10, 1989. James David Zellerbach was the Chief of the European Recovery Program (Marshall Plan) in Italy. Likewise as noted by Ennio Di Nolfo, Myron Taylor the U.S. Envoy to the Holy See saw his operating space reduced by the expanded role of the State Department beginning in 1947. See: E. Di Nolfo, *Vaticano e Stati Uniti (1939-1952)*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 1978, p. 64.

with Allied Military Government in Italy noted: “But back in the days we are talking about, the ECA Administrator was a man very often of greater prestige than the Ambassador and, if he had nothing else, he had money to spend. David Zellerbach in Italy, for example, probably swung more weight than Alexander Kirk, who was a career Foreign Service Officer.”<sup>600</sup>

The inspection report of the embassy produced by H. Merle Cochran in January 1947 documents the state of the embassy at the moment of Dunn’s arrival in Rome.

The political reporting of the Embassy when was Mr. Key was in charge was small in volume and not brilliant in character. The management of the office was weak, and the morale of the staff declined. Part of this was due to the unfavorable rate of exchange and the failure of the Embassy to make appropriate living arrangements for the members of the organization, especially the clerks and low-salaried officers. [...] Ambassador Dunn, newly arrived from the Department, and possessing such valuable background with respect to Departmental policies and needs, should be left opportunity to have direct contact with his officers, to instruct them as to his views, and to estimate their capabilities, before any further changes in officer personnel are made by the Department or suggested by the Embassy.<sup>601</sup>

Cochran recommended that

the Department utilize as Counselor at Rome Foreign Service Officer Homer M. Byington Jr. It is highly essential that the Embassy be strengthened, considering its importance as a Foreign Service establishment, and the need of Ambassador Dunn for a man of Mr. Byington’s qualifications. [...] Mr. Byington seems the ideal choice for this position [...] has an excellent knowledge of Italian and thorough familiarity with Italy.<sup>602</sup>

In line with Cochran’s proposal, Dunn chose Byington as his counselor: the position became official on March 26. The two men continued an excellent working relationship that

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<sup>600</sup> ADST interview, Vincent Checchi with Melbourne Spector, July 11, 1990.

<sup>601</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, January 1947.

<sup>602</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, January 1947.

had originated in wartime Washington D.C.<sup>603</sup> After the retirement of Alexander Kirk, Byington was the State Department's foremost expert on Italy. Inspector Cochran noted on March 28: "Important, urgent, and classified material is given priority and routed directly to Mr. Homer M. Byington Jr., Minister Counselor."<sup>604</sup>

In addition to Byington, the roster of diplomats at Dunn's disposal in Rome boasted significant human capital created through years of experience in Italy. The majority of the career diplomats in senior positions had entered the Foreign Service in the period of 1929-1933 when economic troubles had rendered competition more fierce. Furthermore, in the period from 1947 to 1950, the embassy boasted 10 to 12 career officers as opposed to the four who had served under Ambassadors Phillips and Long in the 1930s. At the outset of 1947, there were 17 employees in the political section, 35 in consular affairs, 78 in administration, and 26 in the economic division.<sup>605</sup> Inspector Cochran noted that "the Political Section is at the moment the strongest section in the Embassy, considering the Ambassador's exceptional strength in this field, and the ability of Messrs. Byington, Jones, Page, and Greene. Mr. Walmsley has also had much political experience, and should be the ideal officer for effecting liaison between political work and the Economic Division of which he will be in charge."<sup>606</sup> The expanded American commitment to Europe resulted in the acceleration of the career of younger officers; men with limited experience overseas became second secretaries in embassies, whereas in the 1930s career officers often had seven or eight years of experience before reaching that level.

First Secretary John Wesley Jones headed the political section from July 1945 to March 1948.<sup>607</sup> Beginning in 1935, he had worked in the consular section of the embassy focusing on

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<sup>603</sup> For reference, In our August 16, 2016 oral interview, Homer M. Byington III described his father "slightly more ideologically and socially conservative" than Dunn. Dunn had also collaborated with Homer M. Byington Sr. in the State Department.

<sup>604</sup> Ibid.

<sup>605</sup> H. Merle Cochran, Organization of Embassy, December 30, 1946, in NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, January 1947.

<sup>606</sup> Ibid.

<sup>607</sup> Jones was born in Sioux City, Iowa in 1907. He entered the Foreign Service in 1930s after graduating from George Washington University.

visas for Italian emigrants to the United States, passports for Americans, and registration of the large American colony living in Rome. In fact, he granted a visa to the renowned physicist Enrico Fermi.<sup>608</sup> By the time Jones was transferred to the Italian Desk in Washington in 1941 he had been in Italy for six years. Inspector Cochran commented that Jones “can be looked to for dependable and serious work under Ambassador Dunn’s guidance.”<sup>609</sup> In the summer of 1947, Jones chaperoned the congressmen and senators of the Herter Commission who had come to Italy to inspect conditions in preparation for the launching of the Marshall Plan. Richard Nixon was the youngest member of the junket and Jones recalled in 1974: “we became good friends at this time and it has lasted through all these years.”<sup>610</sup> Jones totaled 13 years of his career on Italian affairs, ten of which were spent in Rome. He left Rome in March 1948 to become embassy counselor in Nanking where he would be one of the last American diplomats to leave mainland China after the communist takeover.<sup>611</sup>

Another seasoned first secretary in Rome from 1947 to 1950 was Edward Page Jr. (1905-1965).<sup>612</sup> Having worked in Moscow during World War II, he possessed “exceptionally rich experience in Soviet affairs and International Conferences” and arrived in Rome with Ambassador Dunn in late January 1947 for the purpose of “paying special attention to Italian relations with the Soviet and efforts of the latter to penetrate into Italy through the Communist and labor organizations in this country.”<sup>613</sup> In Rome, Page devoted particular attention to the

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<sup>608</sup> Fermi collaborated with American scientists in California and eventually emigrated to the United States after the promulgation of the Fascist regime’s racial laws in 1938.

<sup>609</sup> H. Merle Cochran, Inspector’s Observations, March 28, 1947 in NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, January 1947.

<sup>610</sup> Oral Interview John Wesley Jones with Richard D. McKinzie on June 8, 1974, Truman Presidential Library.

<sup>611</sup> In November 1949, he was reassigned as Deputy Chief of Mission at the Madrid embassy. From 1957 to 1961 he was the U.S. Ambassador to Libya.

<sup>612</sup> Page attended the Newton Country Day School in Massachusetts, graduated from Harvard in 1928, and studied at the University of Grenoble and Ecole Nationale des Langues Orientales Vivantes. He was vice-consul and language officer of Paris Consulate General in 1933-1934, Third Secretary of the Tokyo embassy, vice-consul in Harbin, and Third Secretary in Riga under chief of mission Arthur Bliss Lane.

<sup>613</sup> H. Merle Cochran, Inspector’s Observations, March 28, 1947 in NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, January 1947.

impact of political developments in Eastern Europe on the relationship between Italy and the United States and served as a liaison between the CIA representative and the other embassy officers and the members of the Economic Cooperation Administration.<sup>614</sup> After John Wesley Jones' departure in the spring of 1948, Page headed the embassy's political section.

Outerbridge Horsey, first secretary from 1947 to 1952 was charged with "drafting summary political reports, development of contacts with legislative and political leaders, reporting on the Christian Democratic party and related organizations."<sup>615</sup> Horsey had spent his training period in Naples in 1938-1939 and became fluent in Italian in this assignment to Rome. He had served as third secretary in Madrid from May 1942 until September 1944 and headed the State Department's Spanish Desk in 1945-1946. He was another career diplomat favorable to Francisco Franco. During the war, his wife, like Jane Byington, worked for the OSS in Washington D.C.

Second Secretary of the embassy from 1947 to 1951 was William Knight who had been transferred from Genoa. In this assignment, Knight was taken on as an unofficial apprentice by Byington and Horsey and developed a considerable knowledge of Italy. At the embassy he devoted

almost half of his time to reporting on labor and trade union matters, insofar as they touch on the political pictures. Maintains close contact with the majority of the non-Communist labor leaders in Rome and makes occasional field trips to acquaint himself with labor and social conditions throughout Italy. Responsible for following developments in the several Socialist parties, the Republican party, and the Liberal Party.<sup>616</sup>

Knight's fellow Yale alumnus and second secretary in the period of 1948-1949 was Joseph N. Greene Jr. who had briefly been part of Alexander Kirk's nascent mission in Naples in the

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<sup>614</sup> H. Merle Cochran, Inspector's Observations, March 28, 1947 in NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, January 1947.

<sup>615</sup> H. Merle Cochran, Inspector's Observations, March 28, 1947 in NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, January 1947.

<sup>616</sup> H. Merle Cochran, Inspector's Observations, March 28, 1947 in NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, January 1947.

autumn of 1943.<sup>617</sup> After a short stint in OSS, Greene was sent to Trieste in June 1945 as political advisor to the American military authorities where he reported on Yugoslav activity on the Italian border to Political Advisor Byington in Caserta.

Three other Foreign Service officers in Rome conclude Inspector Cochran's observations: George D. Henderson "arrived in December from Tirana, has provided a slight problem for the Embassy, since he came back from the Balkans with zealous fervor for continuing his battle against the Soviets."; John Gordon Mein "reports on work of Italian Parliament and organization of Italian government....represents the Embassy in negotiation and reporting on treatment of German assets in Italy... reports on certain economic clauses of the Peace Treaty"; and William A. McFadden who "follows and reports on elections and regionalism, right wing political parties and movements, former Italian colonies. Deals with Italian Government and Rome municipal authorities on miscellaneous problems. Receives Italian and American visitors when the Ambassador or Counselor cannot."<sup>618</sup> With the termination of the Allied Commission these men were charged with righting the ship in Italy.

The threat of communism loomed large. On March 27, Ambassador Dunn noted that communist approval of the incorporation of the Lateran Pacts into the Italian Constitution was an example of the elasticity of communist tactics in the world:

Communists may unabashedly support the Royal Family in Rumania, condemn it in Greece, support the Catholic church in Italy and condemn it in Yugoslavia [...] They will not hesitate to lay aside long-ranged objectives, elaborated in Moscow for the party elite if the less inculcated masses of the party and of the country at large are not sufficiently disciplined to go along with such long-ranged objectives. [...] The militants of the party cannot change their basic anti-Vatican

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<sup>617</sup> Greene was born in New York City 1920; both of his parents were New Englanders with a long history in the United States. He attended the prestigious Hotchkiss School, graduated from Yale in 1941, and entered the Foreign Service shortly thereafter. His uncle, J. Lawrence Pond, had been a Foreign Service language officer in Peking in the early 1930s. His first assignment in 1942 was as a vice-consul in Montreal where he was trained by Consul General Homer M. Byington Sr. See: ADST interview, Joseph N. Greene Jr. with Charles Stuart Kennedy, March 12, 1993.

<sup>618</sup> H. Merle Cochran, Inspector's Observations, March 28, 1947 in NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, January 1947. born in Camden, New Jersey in 1917. A Harvard graduate, he had served in the U.S. Army during the war and joined the State Department in 1946.

line, except on orders from Moscow, but are permitted as a tactical maneuver, to adopt a position which they believe will result in a future strengthening of their hold over the masses.<sup>619</sup>

Dunn wrote to Marshall on May 7: “Admittedly conditions are serious, and the present government has not demonstrated its ability to rectify them.”<sup>620</sup> Later that month, antifascist political unity ended with the removal of the communists and socialists from Alcide De Gasperi’s government majority. Thereafter rumors abounded of a communist *coup d’état*. To defend the capital, Interior Minister Scelba relied upon the *carabinieri* which were poorly equipped at the time. At the same time the reduction of American soldiers continued until the last units were withdrawn in November. Violent political manifestations were common: Foreign Minister Carlo Sforza cited 1131 strikes in Italy in 1947, noting that “chain strikes are organized for the express purpose of cancelling out the economic improvement which results from the help that we are receiving from America.”<sup>621</sup> Similarly, embassy secretary William Knight recalled in his memoirs that the strikes had political rather than labor purposes such as the insisting on the removal of Scelba.<sup>622</sup> Thus, polarized Italy became one of the major ideological battlegrounds of the early post-war period. Consequently, the country’s internal politics became more important to the Truman administration and the newborn National Security Council put Italy on its list of priorities in November 1947 and February and March of the following year.<sup>623</sup>

The loss of Poland was a grim reminder of the cost of failure and spurred a more interventionist approach to the American diplomatic representation in Rome.<sup>624</sup> The historian

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<sup>619</sup> Dunn to Marshall, March 27, 1947, NARA, RG 84 U.S. Embassy Rome Classified Records, Box 19, 1947.

<sup>620</sup> NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 203.

<sup>621</sup> C. Sforza, “Italy, the Marshall Plan and the ‘Third Force’”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol 26, No 3, April 1948, p. 456.

<sup>622</sup> W. E. Knight, *Letters to the Twenty-Second Century*, Bethesda, Maryland, Araluen Press, 1998, p. 146.

<sup>623</sup> Sergio Romano, *Lo scambio ineguale*, Bari, Laterza,, 1995, p. 37.

<sup>624</sup> Lane had been a mentor and friend to the younger generation of determined anticommunists such as Homer Byington and Edward Page Jr., both of whom were in Rome at the time of Lane’s resignation.

Kenneth Weisbrode notes that “the Cold War was seen as a fact of life that demanded the full commitment of the United States” an opinion that was “held particularly strongly by old-line officers such as Sam Reber and Jimmy Dunn, then serving in Rome.”<sup>625</sup> In his many public speeches Ambassador Dunn communicated his hopes and expectations directly to the Italian people. On April 28, 1947, he underlined the importance of increasing industrial production to jumpstart the reconstruction in an address to the Naples Chamber of Commerce: “Many of the gathered here are businessmen. It is particularly fitting that I address these words to you because the success or failure of building a new Italy depends in large part upon you.”<sup>626</sup> This particular speech, a classic example of the politics of productivity, was given wide and positive coverage in local newspapers, even the Neapolitan communist organ *La Voce* limited itself to a summary of the events. Dunn’s liberal economic approach mirrored that of his mentor Cordell Hull. As noted by the historian Charles Maier, productivity was a useful construct that could “serve to explain American economic aspirations [...] and supposedly dictated no political interference.”<sup>627</sup>

Dunn interpreted communism as chiefly an economic problem. In a September 9 speech in Naples for the arrival of the *Jericho Victory* which brought more than 9,000 tons of grain across the Atlantic he observed that

The moral force needed to win liberty and self-government is often reduced when one has an empty stomach. The freedom from want is perhaps the most important of the essential conditions for the full realization of liberty. This gift, like all the others in the AUSA program, is offered by a people that prizes liberty above everything else, in the

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<sup>625</sup> K, Weisbrode, *The Atlantic Century*, p. 89.

<sup>626</sup> J. Dunn, *Discorsi in Italia 1947-1950*, Rome, The Daily American Publishing Company, 1951, p. 17. “Molti di voi qui presenti sono uomini di affari. È a voi particolarmente che desidero rivolgere queste parole poiché dipende in gran parte da voi il successo o il fallimento della gigantesca impresa di costruire una nuova Italia.”

<sup>627</sup> C. Maier, “Alliance and Autonomy: European identity and U.S. foreign policy objectives in the Truman years”, in *The Truman Presidency*, editor M. Lacey, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 278.

hope that the Italian people can enjoy the same liberty now and in the future.<sup>628</sup>

In a speech in Bari on September 14, the ambassador likened communism as a threat to Christian civilization similar to that had been posed by Islam which led to the medieval crusades. On December 1, he wrote to Bernard Berenson in Florence:

Last evening I had a rather intimate talk with General Field-Marshal Smuts, who was passing through Rome after attending the wedding ceremony in London. He views the present situation in Europe with the deepest concern and says that we are very possibly now in the stage which corresponds to that of Hitler's performance in 1936 and 37 when he was trying out the resistance powers of those in Europe against whom he planned to move.<sup>629</sup>

### **The Electoral Campaign of 1948**

With a view toward the crucial national Italian election scheduled for the following spring, on December 27, 1947, Henry Tasca of the embassy identified four necessary actions to thwart the Italian Communist Party, of which some elements would remain a mainstay of American foreign policy toward Italy for the following 25 years.<sup>630</sup>

1. Dissemination of information in various forms regarding values of democratic processes and organization for achievement of social and economic progress.
2. Provision of direct aid to selected political parties for establishment and development of field and capillary organizations in the form of funds necessary for financing personnel, inculcation of principles,

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<sup>628</sup> J. Dunn, *Discorsi in Italia 1947-1950*, Rome, The Daily American Publishing Company, 1951, p. 33. "La forza morale per conquistare la libertà e l'autogoverno spesso viene meno quando si abbia lo stomaco vuoto. La libertà dal bisogno è forse la più importante tra le condizioni essenziali per il pieno raggiungimento della libertà. Questo dono, come tutti gli altri del programma AUSA, viene offerto da un popolo che pregia la libertà al disopra di ogni altra cosa, nella speranza che il popolo italiano possa d'ora in poi e per sempre godere dei benefici di essa."

<sup>629</sup> Dunn to Berenson, December 1, 1947, Bernard Berenson Papers. Jan Cristiaan Smuts was the Prime Minister of South Africa.

<sup>630</sup> Tasca was the Treasury Department representative at the embassy.

selection of aggressive personnel for electoral campaigns and tasks requiring energetic measures.

3. Counter-intelligence and penetration of Communist organizations to corrode and sabotage Party from within.
4. Distribute aid through specially selected charitable organizations in the form of lira payments concentrated among the lower income groups and in areas most sensitive to subversive Communist activity.<sup>631</sup>

Embassy Counselor Byington forwarded Tasca's report to Secretary of State Marshall and stated that it

may prove useful in indicating the nature of the problem which Italy faces in trying to establish firmly a democratic parliamentary form of government guaranteeing all of the human freedoms inherent in a working democracy. In addition, suggestions for offsetting Communist tactics through direct action are put forward. These serve to illustrate sharply the dilemma which derives from the time needed for a Marshall Plan to be effective, and the corroding and disruptive effects on Italian economic recovery and reconstruction of the policies and tactics for the Moscow-directed capillary Italian Communist organization.<sup>632</sup>

The actions outlined by Tasca could not be carried out in a traditional diplomatic sense because Italy was a sovereign nation. Therefore, the newborn CIA executed its first major campaign overseas in the months leading up to the election of April 18, 1948. The covert action was dictated from Washington, specifically the Director of the Policy Planning Staff George Kennan who successfully pressured Secretary of Defense James Forrestal into approving it.<sup>633</sup> The high-ranking professional diplomats in Rome at the time worked side-by-side with the CIA's agents and came to know some of the men who later became the principal figures of the American intelligence establishment such as James Angleton.<sup>634</sup> In fact, the

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<sup>631</sup> Byington to Marshall, December 27, 1947, NARA RG 84, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 17, (1947).

<sup>632</sup> Ibid.

<sup>633</sup> G. Herken, *The Georgetown Set: Friends and Rivals in Cold War Washington*, New York, Random House, 2014, p. 75.

<sup>634</sup> Angleton born in Boise, Idaho in 1917, had grown up in Milan. He entered the OSS after his graduation from Yale in 1941. He returned to Italy in 1943 and eventually joined the CIA.

historian Deborah Kisatsky identifies Edward Page Jr. as Angleton's assistant in the time of the election.<sup>635</sup> Given this state of affairs and the fact that all classified mail was delivered to his desk in the embassy, and also considering his wife's role in the wartime OSS, Homer M. Byington Jr. undoubtedly played a significant role in the covert aid to the Christian Democrats and would have known Federico Umberto D'Amato who became an important official in the Interior Ministry's secret intelligence department.

During a lunch held at the embassy on January 26, 1948, Deputy Prime Minister Giuseppe Saragat indicated his belief that the Marshall Plan constituted the most effective countermeasure against communism in Italy because it gave economic security to workers who would otherwise be easy prey for communist propaganda.<sup>636</sup> Saragat gave the impression that Nenni's socialists had access to unlimited funds from the communists for the upcoming election. Still, the social democrat foresaw a result that would mirror the composition of the Constituent Assembly, albeit with the Popular Front gaining up to 800,000 votes in the South while retaining the same support in the North as in 1946. In order to reduce the communist turnout, in early February, Counselor Byington spurred the State Department to ask the editors of pro-Marshall Plan Italian language newspapers in the United States to encourage their readers to cut out clips and include them in their letters to relatives in Italy to aid the Christian Democrats.<sup>637</sup> The letter-writing campaign played a major role in the Christian Democrat victory.

The above-cited documents tied to the election of April 1948 confirm the historiographical narrative of developments at the embassy as established by Miller, Hughes, Giovagnoli, and Mistry. Neglected in the historical works on the election constituted a true case of international ideological conflict that was not limited to Italy, the United States, and the Soviet Union. On February 27, 1948, days after the Soviet led *coup d'état* in Czechoslovakia, Paul

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<sup>635</sup> See: D. Kiatsky, *The United States and the European Right 1945-1955*, Ohio State University Press, 2005, p. 117.

<sup>636</sup> Rome Embassy to Marshall, January 25, 1948, Memo of Conversation with Giuseppe Saragat, NARA RG 84, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 29, (1948).

<sup>637</sup> Byington's letter to Byrnes of early February 1948 is cited in W. L. Wall, *Inventing the "American Way": The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement*, Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 248.

Culbertson, the U.S. Chargé d’Affaires in Madrid, forwarded to Rome the contents of a personal letter that he had received from the Director General of Foreign Policy of the Spanish Foreign Office, José Sebastián de Erice. Erice characterized the results of the local election in Pescara as a “dangerous symptom” that indicated “the three large Italian parties of the masses still have their votes distributed in a form very close to that of the recent Constituent Assembly elections.”<sup>638</sup> In addition, Erice considered the prospect of a strong Popular Block showing akin to the communist penetration in the 1936 Spanish elections lost by Gil Robles, who Erice likened to De Gasperi.

On March 3, the U.S. Ambassador in Paris Jefferson Caffery wrote to Rome that the French Foreign Office continued to view the situation in Italy with the “utmost gravity” and considered essential the “combined efforts and cooperated action of the French, British and US Governments” to strengthen the De Gasperi Government.<sup>639</sup> Similarly, on March 16, it became known that the Belgian Ambassador to Rome was “pessimistic” regarding the forthcoming elections due to likely gains by the Communist Party in the South.<sup>640</sup> At the same time John Erhardt, the American envoy in Vienna, wrote that “Austrian political leaders without exception attached very highest importance to result of Italian elections since Austrian position would obviously be rendered even more precarious than it is if entire southern border should be Communist-controlled.”<sup>641</sup>

On April 15, the eve of the elections, Dunn spoke in Naples at the ceremony for the arrival of the 600th ship bringing aid to Italy:

We are gathered here to greet the arrival of the 600th AUSA ship....This is a highly significant circumstance. The vital aid furnished by America to Italy has fully reached its objective. The Italian bread

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<sup>638</sup> Although the DC was the strongest single party in the Pescara elections, the result would be counteracted by the total number of votes for the two parties of the Popular Block.

<sup>639</sup> Caffery to Rome Embassy, March 3, 1948, NARA, RG 84, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 29, (1948).

<sup>640</sup> John Carter Vincent to Rome Embassy, March 17, 1948, NARA RG 84, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 29, (1948).

<sup>641</sup> Erhard to Rome Embassy, March 23, 1948, NARA RG 84, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 29, (1948).

rations has been maintained thanks to grain sent from America. American carbon has allowed the Italian industries to produce and provide work. Streptomycin, penicillin, and DDT, originating in America, have saved countless lives. The crude specter of devastation, arising from the ruins of war, has been tamed.<sup>642</sup>

The Christian Democrats enjoyed a great victory in the April 18 elections and optimism spread throughout the embassy. The autonomy given to Dunn by Secretary of State Marshall had been a crucial factor. Given the covert CIA intervention, Stalin's observation that the victorious nations in World War II would impose their own political system on the conquered territories turned out to be prophetic in Western as well as Eastern Europe. In light of De Gasperi's reorganization of his cabinet, in particular the removal of Budget Minister Luigi Einaudi, Ambassador Dunn was "ecstatic" and sent two "glowing telegrams to Washington."<sup>643</sup> Still, the long-term outlook was not always rosy, and there was no way of knowing that the Christian Democrats would remain dominate Italian politics in the future. On May 26, Walter Dowling of the Italian Desk and the Director of EUR John Hickerson, both career Foreign Service officers, concluded that economic reforms were necessary to reduce the appeal of communism and encouraged Dunn to pressure De Gasperi's government in this direction:

As we see it, Italian leaders have at most four years, if all goes well, in which to remedy with U.S. aid, conditions which enabled Popular Front to amass eight million votes in spite of determination all anti-communists forces....[...] We feel therefore, Socialist leaders must be made to realize individual groups will be easy prey Communist maneuvers [...] They must appreciate they can wield effective influence only as single force and can make constructive contribution Italy's

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<sup>642</sup> J. Dunn, *Discorsi in Italia 1947-1950*, Rome, The Daily American Publishing Company, 1951, p. 66. "Siamo qui convenuti per salutare l'arrivo della 600 nave AUSA... Questa è una circostanza assai significativa. L'aiuto vitale fornito dall'America all'Italia ha raggiunto in pieno il suo obiettivo. La razione di pane italiana ha potuto essere mantenuta, grazie agli invii di cereali dall'America. Il carbone americano ha consentito alle industrie italiane di produrre e dare lavoro. Streptomycin, penicillina e DDT, provenienti dall'America, hanno salvato innumerevoli vite. Il crudo spettro della devastazione, sorgente dalle rovine della guerra, è stato domato."

<sup>643</sup> J.E. Miller, *The United States and Italy 1940-1950: The Politics and Diplomacy of Stabilization*, p. 252.

future only in loyal cooperation with Christian Democrats on progressive program.<sup>644</sup>

### 3.3 Contacts with the Far Right, 1947-1950

In May 1945, James Angleton, the head of OSS Counterintelligence in Italy, organized the rescue of Prince Junio Valerio Borghese from execution by Italian partisans in Milan. The action was approved by Admiral Stone who had been petitioned on the matter by his contacts in the Roman aristocracy: Borghese was a member of a prestigious family in the Roman nobility which had produced several cardinals and Pope Paul V.<sup>645</sup> During the war, Borghese had been the commander of the X-Mas frogman unit which became known for its bold actions in the Mediterranean, in particular for heavily damaging two British battleships in the Port of Alexandria. After the September 1943 armistice, Borghese continued to fight alongside the Germans in service to the Salò Republic. In 1944, he ordered the execution of antifascist partisans in Northern Italy.

Far right political elements tied to Borghese continued to be active despite the prince's incarceration.<sup>646</sup> An intelligence report from December 22, 1946, on reactionary and monarchist groups in Italy was sent by Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson to Rome on March 10, 1947:

B. Neo-Fascist Movements. [...]

3. There has also been a revival lately of activity on the part of the former X MAS organization of the days of the Fascist Socialist Republic, although its principal leader, Prince BORGHESE, is still being detained. Its most active member is Ezio Maria GRAY, the Fascist journalist who was recently granted amnesty by the Special Tribunal. The movement is reportedly financed by the Marchese

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<sup>644</sup> Marshall to Dunn, May 26, 1948, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 32.

<sup>645</sup> See: G. Flamini, *Brennero connection: alle radici del terrorismo italiano*, Rome, Editori riuniti, 2003, p. 36. As previously noted, Stone married an Italian countess in 1947.

<sup>646</sup> Borghese was rearrested after being brought to Rome by Angleton in May 1945.

PATRIZZI (sic), Commendatore LUCE and TUDINI and TALENTI, Construction Engineers.<sup>647</sup>

A handwritten note on the bottom of the page, citing the March 28, 1947, edition of the newspaper *Italia Libera*, reported that 13 of the 17 X-MAS brigade criminals brought before the High Court of Milan had absconded. Borghese was one of four who remained. On February 17, 1949, Borghese left prison due to a general amnesty for fascist war crimes.<sup>648</sup> Soon thereafter the name “Prince Borghese” appeared weekly in the far right Roman daily *Il Tempo* as being present at the “Whip Club” in Via Sistina, whereas in the weeks prior to his release, only the Princess Borghese was listed as present.<sup>649</sup> Borghese joined the neofascist MSI in 1951 and in 1970 directed an aborted *coup d'état* against the Republic.

Like his predecessors in Via Veneto, Dunn assiduously frequented the Roman aristocracy in both official and unofficial functions. Jeff Graham Parsons, a Foreign Service officer who was serving as Myron Taylor’s assistant in Rome noted that “Jimmy is magnificent and a model to us all as to how to stand the proximity of the great.”<sup>650</sup> On March 31, Dunn and his wife were at the Whip Club along with the Prince and Princess Torlonia who were major landowners in the Abruzzo region.<sup>651</sup> Around this time Prince Torlonia reached out to Borghese in an attempt to forestall the looming legislation on agrarian reform:

Although he (Borghese) was numbered among the most illustrious members of the Roman nobility, that group had shunned and abandoned him out of cowardice. When the agrarian reform laws were being considered by the Government, however, the titled landowners, headed by Prince Torlonia, recontacted Borghese because they believed it

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<sup>647</sup> Acheson to Rome Embassy, March 10, 1947, NARA, RG 84, U.S. Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

<sup>648</sup> Shortly after leaving prison in 1949 Borghese was also in contact with Giovanni Roberti, the MSI deputy who had defended him against accusations in Parliament. See: G. Roberti, *L'opposizione di destra in Italia, 1946-1979*, Naples, Adriano, 1988, p. 49.

<sup>649</sup> Prince and Princess were listed together for the first time at the Whip Club on March 3, 1949. *Il Tempo* was founded in 1944 by Renato Angiolillo.

<sup>650</sup> Parsons to “Pete”, September 21, 1947, J. Graham Parsons papers, Box 1, Folder 6.

<sup>651</sup> *Il Tempo*, March 31, 1949.

possible to ally him with their interests and because of the political role they thought he might have been able to assume.<sup>652</sup>

The following week, on April 7, Embassy Counselor Byington was present at the Whip Club along with the Prince and Princess D'Orleans (respectively the uncle and aunt of Borghese) and landowners in Ardena, Lazio and the Prince and Princess Torlonia. In addition to his long-term friendship with Prince Caracciolo, and his relationship to the family of Baron Tristano Gallotti who had been a representative of the National Fascist Confederation of Agriculture, Byington became close to Baroness Gaby di Robilant (Barracco) whose husband Baron Alfonso Barracco had inherited property from his uncle Giovanni Barracco which amounted to the largest *latifondo* in Italy with holdings in Calabria extending from the Sila Mountains to the Ionian Coast.<sup>653</sup>

It is evident that these relationships colored Byington's judgment regarding agrarian reform as he had reported to Washington on August 16, 1948, that the idea of a law based on a maximum limit of land ownership was "demagogic".<sup>654</sup> As noted by the historian Emanuele Bernardi, the positions adopted by colleagues Edward Page Jr. and Outerbridge Horsey were even more favorable to the large landowners.<sup>655</sup> In fact, according to Bernardi, the prevailing opinion inside the embassy was that agrarian reform was unnecessary or should be limited in scope until the killing of three agricultural workers at Melissa (Calabria) in late October

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<sup>652</sup> Francis Meloy to Unknown CIA Chief of Station, June 7, 1963, Available at CIA FOIA website: [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO\\_0022.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO_0022.pdf) Accessed November 26, 2016.

<sup>653</sup> In line with the tradition of the *latifondisti*, as a young man Giovanni Barracco had come to Naples for university studies. His family had married into the titled Caracciolo and Carafa families. In 1939, Gaby di Robilant bought the Villa Emma in Posillipo which borders the Villa Maria Pia of the Italian royal family. Given Byington's ties to the Princess Maria José, it is possible that he met di Robilant in this period. Prince Caracciolo was listed in *Il Tempo* as present at the Whip Club on April 21, 1949.

<sup>654</sup> See: E. Bernardi, *La riforma agraria in Italia e gli Stati Uniti: Guerra fredda, Piano Marshall e interventi per il Mezzogiorno negli anni del centrismo degasperiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2006, p. 119.

<sup>655</sup> Ibid. "Una posizione ancora più favorevole ai detentori di grandi tenute fu assunta da altre due figure, il capo della sezione "Politica" e primo segretario Edward Page Jr. [...] e Outerbridge Horsey, entrambi convinti difensori della proprietà privata, in stretti rapporti con la nobiltà terriera italiana ed anticomunisti ferventi."

1949.<sup>656</sup> On the other hand, an American military counter intelligence report from the Naples area in April 1946 had characterized the *latifondo* system much differently: “The control of the lands by the feudal barons throws gasoline on the fire in favor of the left. A state of affairs in which a family, or even a series of families - can control the well-being and fate of thousands of people is a cruel system that must be changed.”<sup>657</sup> On October 21, 1950, the Italian Parliament passed a transitional law which sanctioned the expropriation of lands from the *latifondisti* in favor of landless farmers who subsequently became property owners for the first time. Still, as unregistered private conversations, the specific dynamics of the landowners’ lobbying of the embassy from 1947 to 1950 remain unclear.

On July 2, 1949, the Dunns as well as Prince and Princess Borghese, and Gilberto Bernabei were listed in attendance at a party for the National Holiday of Canada.<sup>658</sup> In addition to the question of agrarian reform, Dunn’s relationship with Borghese suggests a link to the development of a stay-behind organization created in 1949 which was designed to collaborate with NATO forces in resisting a communist invasion of Western Europe. Borghese had retained a reputation as a particularly effective and ruthless commander in his 1944 campaign to protect the lines of communication and transportation for the Germany army against the partisans in Northern Italy. The creation of stay-behind organizations was ordered by the Joint

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<sup>656</sup> E. Bernardi, *La riforma agraria in Italia e gli Stati Uniti: Guerra fredda, Piano Marshall e interventi per il Mezzogiorno negli anni del centrismo degasperiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2006, p. 10.

<sup>657</sup> NARA RG 84 Records of the Political advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, General Records 1946, Box 105.

<sup>658</sup> *Il Tempo*, July 2, 1949. Bernabei had been the head of the Mussolini’s cabinet in the Republic of Salò and was identified as the go-between for the Defense Minister Giulio Andreotti and Borghese in a letter, presumably written by the prince shortly before his death in 1974. Of the letter Nicola Tonietto writes: “La novità più rilevante consiste nella presenza di Gilberto Bernabei come rappresentante di Giulio Andreotti, indicato dagli americani come ‘traghettatore’ della ‘drastica svolta della politica nazionale’.” See: N. Tonietto, “Un colpo di stato mancato: Il golpe Borghese e l’eversione nera in Italia” *Diacronie, Studi di Storia Contemporanea*, N. 27, 3/2016, p. 23.

Chiefs of Staff in Washington and organized in conjunction with the CIA.<sup>659</sup> Furthermore, on June 18, 1948, the National Security Council issued the Directive 10/2 which approved CIA support of indigenous anti-communist elements in countries at risk of Soviet subterfuge in light of the “vicious covert activities of the USSR, its satellite countries and Communist groups to discredit and defeat the aims and activities of the United States and other Western powers.”<sup>660</sup> The relationship between Dunn and Prince Borghese mirrors that of George Kennan with Gustav Hilger, a former Nazi official in the German Foreign Ministry who had become an expert on the Soviet Union during his time at the German Embassy in Moscow and was recruited to the CIA by Kennan.<sup>661</sup>

In 1947, Dunn instructed Counselor Byington to avoid the aristocratic Roman society in order to focus on representation with Italian politicians and officials and the latter, for the most part, remained out of the social papers.<sup>662</sup> The communist press was aware of Byington and on July 13, 1948, Francesco Longo of *L'Unità* satirically described him as “the diplomat who prepares the famous speeches of eternal electoral propaganda, the ‘brain’ of Palazzo Margherita, Mr. Byington, if you will.”<sup>663</sup> The following day, while exiting Montecitorio, Palmiro Togliatti, the Secretary of the Italian Communist Party was shot three times by Antonio Pallante, a young nationalist and neofascist sympathizer of Neapolitan origin who

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<sup>659</sup> See: A. Karalekas, *History of the Central Intelligence Agency*, Walnut Creek, CA, Aegean Park Press, 1977, p. 36. At the time, Secretary of State Acheson estimated that the Soviet Union held 30 divisions in Eastern Europe compared to the 3 and a half American, 6 French, and 6 possible from the Low Countries. The 1949 conception of the Mutual Defense Aid Program (MDAP) was considered a way to “put a hard shell” on the vulnerable European countries to prevent a quick Soviet march to victory in an invasion of Western Europe. Accompanied by American capability to strike into Soviet Russia, MDAP, approved by the Congress on October 6, would serve as a more effective deterrent to Soviet aggression. See: D. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, pp. 308-309.

<sup>660</sup> United States, National Security Council, Directive on Office of Special Projects, June 18, 1948.

<sup>661</sup> On the relationship between Kennan and Hilger see: G. Herken, *The Georgetown Set*, pp. 74-75. Kennan later asserted that he was not aware that Hilger might have been involved in war crimes on the Eastern Front.

<sup>662</sup> H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 53.

<sup>663</sup> Byington was “il diplomatico che prepara i discorsi ormai famosi di eterna propaganda elettorale, il “cervello” di palazzo Margherita, mister Byington, insomma.” See: F. Longo, “È arrivato l’ambasciatore (dell’ERP)” *L'Unità*, July 13, 1948, p. 3, The boss of the Far West identified in the article was James David Zellerbach, chief of the ERP in Italy.

resided in Sicily. Pallante apparently acted alone, ironically he had previously desired to write for *L'Unità* before returning to his prior anticommunism.<sup>664</sup> Still, Byington's name never again appeared in the communist organ. As a testament to his influence in the State Department in 1948, on his suggestion the United States government purchased the Villa Ruspoli located near the Via Appia Antica for the residence of the embassy counselor. There, Byington's dinner guests included Prime Minister De Gasperi and his undersecretary Giulio Andreotti, Foreign Minister Sforza, Deputy Prime Minister Giuseppe Saragat, and Interior Minister Mario Scelba.<sup>665</sup>

In the autumn of 1949 and the following winter, Byington and Dunn no longer appear in *Il Tempo* as present at the Whip Club. In this period, in addition to celebrities like Orson Welles, the club was frequented by neofascist elements such as Prince Valerio Pignatelli, who directed subversive political activity in Calabria and Campania and Marchese Patrizi, possibly the financier of Borghese's revived X-MAS organization.<sup>666</sup> Other conservative personages registered in this period were Baron Alcover of the Spanish embassy, Prince and Princess Borghese, Count and Countess Senni, Prince Philipp of Hesse (the widower of the Italian Princess Mafalda) who had served as a go-between for Hitler and Mussolini; Countess Ciano, and lastly, Count Borromeo whose father, the Milanese industrialist, Gilberto Borromeo Arese, had leased the Villa Taverna to Ambassador Long in 1933.

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<sup>664</sup> A. Custodero, "Attentato a Togliatti le lettere segrete", *La Repubblica*, April 29, 2007, pp. 38-39.

<sup>665</sup> H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 53 footnote. The close collaboration between the Rome Embassy and the Italian government also existed in the religious sphere. In 1949 a group of Texas-based Seventh-Day Adventists led by Cline and Harold Paden established a missionary church at Grottaferrata near the Pope's summer residence at Castel Gandolfo. The Adventists managed to convert a large number of people causing great embarrassment to Pope Pius XII. For an in-depth analysis of this situation see: R.P. Domenico, "'For the Cause of Christ Here in Italy': America's Protestant Challenge in Italy and the Cultural Ambiguity of the Cold War.", *Diplomatic History*, Vol 29, Issue 4, pp. 625-654, September 2005.

<sup>666</sup> It is unclear if the Marchese Patrizi listed is Bernardo, Giovanni, or Costantino Patrizi Naro Montoro. The family held the hereditary title of Standard Bearer of the Holy Roman Church. As previously noted, Giovanni had married the American Fanny Billings in 1927.

Byington was the embassy's reference point for the Neapolitan aristocracy represented by Baron Guglielmo Terracciano who had married the American Alexandra Flowerton.<sup>667</sup> On January 14, 1949, George D. LaMont, one of the American consuls in Naples wrote to Byington in Rome on behalf of the lawyer Giacomo Costa who asked for \$200,000 to cover the debts of the Italian Socialist Party.<sup>668</sup> LaMont asserted that Costa "came to Naples ostensibly in connection with a Masonic meeting and I met him at a reception given by Guglielmo Terracciano who, I believe, you know. [...] Terracciano is not a Socialist unless a recent convert. As you know he has a reputation of being pro-fascist."<sup>669</sup> The document demonstrates that Byington was not extraneous to Masonic elements in Naples. Costa was under the impression that any Christian Democrat politician close to the Embassy could obtain ERP money. Since the United States had also given money to Saragat's social democrats, he thought it prudent to ask the embassy to fund the socialist effort to split from the communists. In exchange for financial aid, Costa salaciously offered to use his position in the PSI to infiltrate the PCI in order to expose possible Communist operatives working in the U.S. Embassy or American consulates in Italy.<sup>670</sup> Costa's mercenary status had previously been alluded to in Galeazzo Ciano's diary on February 4, 1938: "The lawyer Giacomo Costa, antifascist who escaped from Lipari two months ago, has offered his services as an informer and agent provocateur among the exiles in Paris."<sup>671</sup>

While Dunn was away promoting the Marshall Plan, Chargé d'Affaires Byington met important members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee such as James W. Fulbright

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<sup>667</sup> Baroness Terracciano lived in Italy for 50 years starting in the 1930s and later served as the honorary chairman of the USO for the 6th Fleet in Naples, where in the 1950s and 1960s she edited the magazine *Panorama* for U.S. military personnel.

<sup>668</sup> In the April 18, 1948, national elections Costa had received 303 votes on Republican Party ticket in Campania.

<sup>669</sup> LaMont to Byington, January 14, 1949, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 47.

<sup>670</sup> In the elections for the First Parliament of the Italian Republic in 1948, Giacomo Costa was part of an electoral list for the Italian Republican Party in Naples. See: *I deputati e senatori del primo parlamento repubblicano*, Rome, La Navicella, 1949, p. 728.

<sup>671</sup> See G. Ciano, *Diario 1937-1943*, Milan, Rizzoli, 1980, p. 94. "L'Avv. Giacomo Costa, antifascista che fuggì da Lipari due mesi or sono, ci ha offerto i suoi servizi di informatore e di agente provocatore tra i fuorusciti a Parigi. È in contatto col giornalista Pascazio. Ce ne varremo."

and Alben Barkley when they came on a junket to Rome in September 1948.<sup>672</sup> The latter became Truman's vice-president shortly thereafter. During his tenure as minister counselor, which was also noteworthy for the creation of NATO, Byington also established close ties with high-ranking Italian military officers such as on the occasion of a ceremony in Naples on June 24, 1948, which commemorated the return of the remains of American soldiers to the United States; present were: General Orlando, Secretary General of the Ministry of War; General Aimone Cat, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force; General De Giorgis, Commander of the *Carabinieri*; Admiral Manfredi, commander of the Third Air Zone; General Carmineo, Territorial Commander; Admiral Bigi, who represented the Chief of Staff of the Navy; General Cupini, Commander of the Air Academy; and the *carabinieri* generals Robino and Branca along with Naples Prefect Paternò.<sup>673</sup> The General Mario Aimone-Cat, born 1894 in Salerno, was identified as the chief organizer of a planned monarchist *coup d'état* in 1946 and was likely tied to Edoardo Costa's activities at that time.<sup>674</sup> Given these relationships and the fact that all classified mail at the embassy arrived at his desk, it is a certainty that Byington knew about the stay-behind organization that eventually became Gladio.<sup>675</sup>

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<sup>672</sup> "U.S. Group Arrives in Rome for Parley" *New York Times*, September 5, 1948. p. 5. Barkley was the father-in-law of Byington's close friend Douglas MacArthur II so it is likely that they already knew each other.

<sup>673</sup> NARA, RG 59, Decimal File 1945-1949, James Dunn, Box 688.

<sup>674</sup> G. Casarrubea and M. Cereghino, *Tango Connection: l'oro nazifascista, l'america latina e la guerra al comunismo in Italia (1943-1947)*, Milan, Bompiani, 2007, p. 73.

<sup>675</sup> Another example of the embassy connections to military circles was a cocktail hosted by the Foreign Service officer Joseph E. Jacobs and his wife in May 1950 which was attended by Dunn, General Trezzani, ERP director Zellerbach, Byington, Admiral Pecori Girardi, the Minister Guidotti, General Marras, the General Re, and the Captain Carlo Barbassetti. *Il Tempo*, May 3, 1950. Jacobs was Dunn's special assistant.

### 3.4 The Italian Foreign Office, 1947-1950

On February 3, 1947, just days after Ambassador Dunn assumed control in Rome, De Gasperi formed his third government. Perhaps the most important change was that Count Carlo Sforza replaced Pietro Nenni as Foreign Minister. Like many U.S. Foreign Service officers, Sforza had been critical of Secretary of State Byrnes' handling of the CFM negotiations: "The work of making peace was seen as a series of separate problems, to deal with through a process of endless negotiations that almost always resulted in a success for the Russian tactics and the spreading of Soviet influence."<sup>676</sup> In his exile in the United States, Sforza had become close to Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson who had written a letter of resignation (not submitted) in the spring of 1946 owing to Byrnes' operating method.<sup>677</sup> As previously noted, Sforza had been Byington's choice as regent for Victor Emmanuel Prince of Naples if the monarchy had triumphed in the institutional referendum.<sup>678</sup> Both men were favorable to Italian trusteeship of the Italian colonies of Ethiopia and Libya, the fate of which had not been decided by the peace treaty.<sup>679</sup>

Dunn updated Secretary of State Marshall on February 24, 1947:

Count Sforza has brought some changes to Foreign Ministry though not as profound as those which occurred when Nenni became Foreign Minister. As is usual when there is a change of Ministers at Palazzo Chigi, Sforza has replaced all of the people in Nenni's cabinet with men of his own choosing. [...] Sforza and his cabinet impress us as a group of true liberals with a clear understanding of Italy's international

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<sup>676</sup> C. Sforza "Italy, the Marshall Plan and the "Third Force", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 26, No. 3, April 1948, p. 450.

<sup>677</sup> D. Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*, p. 163.

<sup>678</sup> On the contrary, Nenni remained *persona non grata* for conservative American diplomats even after the "Opening to the Left" in December 1963.

<sup>679</sup> Regarding the colonies, Byington often met with Baron Ferdinando Quaranta di San Severino who in 1939 had written the volume *Ethiopia: An Empire in the Making*, London, P.S. King & Son, 1939.

position and the necessity of establishing and maintaining friendly relations with the United Nations, singly and collectively.<sup>680</sup>

Interesting is that Sforza's undersecretary was the Neapolitan communist Eugenio Reale (1905-1986) who had been imprisoned by the Fascist regime from 1932 to 1937. After his release, Reale again took up clandestine antifascist activity and fought for the Spanish Republic against Franco. As noted by the historian Agostino Giovagnoli, the nomination of Reale did not worry Ambassador Dunn who confirmed that Sforza's undersecretary could be "happily ignored if the minister and secretary general desire."<sup>681</sup>

While Dunn was impressed by the "liberal" nature of Count Sforza's cabinet, the Italian Foreign Minister chose not to make changes to neither the rank and file nor the higher diplomatic levels: both groups were largely composed of men with a fascist ideological formation while the latter mostly belonged to politically influential aristocratic families. Still, the cabinet was more liberal than its predecessor. Dunn, who had not been posted overseas since the 1920s (and had never served in Italy) knew but a small percentage of the Italian diplomats. On the other hand, for FSO's like Byington and Durbrow many of the Italian diplomats who had served under fascism were personal friends and a guarantee of anticommunism. Ironically, in 1958, the director of the *New York Times* European bureau, Cyrus Sulzberger, a mouthpiece of American diplomats, lambasted Prime Minister Amintore Fanfani (who was also Foreign Minister) for carrying out a purge of diplomats who strongly favored Italy's role in NATO and replacing them with the less trustworthy "Mau Mau" group which sought to chart a more independent course for Italy.<sup>682</sup>

Dunn wrote to Secretary of State Marshall on November 8, 1947 that "several neo-fascist movements gaining strength" of which he noted in particular the Italian Social Movement

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<sup>680</sup> Dunn to Marshall, February 24, 1947, NARA, RG 84, U.S. Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 19. The new Cabinet Chief was Dr. Vittorio Ivella, a non-career diplomat who had previously served as the Cultural Attaché in the Italian Embassy in Washington. Ivella's assistant was the career diplomat Marchese Alessandro Tassoni.

<sup>681</sup> See: A. Giovagnoli, *L'Italia nel nuovo ordine mondiale: politica ed economica dal 1945 al 1947*, Milan, Vita e Pensiero, 2000, p. 118.

<sup>682</sup> See: G. Mammarella, *L'Eccezione americana: la politica estera statunitense dall'indipendenza alla guerra in Iraq*, Rome, Carocci, 2005, p. 116.

(MSI) which he described as being “composed of ‘left wing’ Fascist republicans, rumored run behind scenes by Fascist leaders in hiding, including Carlo Sforza.”<sup>683</sup> It is difficult to assess the accuracy of this report but the fact that the Republican Foreign Minister had become a primary target of communist propaganda suggests that these rumors were unfounded. Sforza himself wrote in 1948:

As it becomes more and more apparent that all this violence is deliberately organized, the Italian people, who have a good deal of experience with this sort of thing, are less and less likely to be taken in by it. The very important thing is that, in resisting it, we must not let ourselves be dragged outside the boundaries of legality; in the face of provocation we must resist the temptation to use the methods of dictatorship.<sup>684</sup>

Randolfo Pacciardi, a fellow Tuscan of the Republican Party had followed a similar political journey to that of Sforza; in May 1947 Pacciardi indicated a refusal to accept the extension of Cold War polarization to Italy’s political system by deciding not to participate in De Gasperi’s government which excluded the communists and socialists. The following December, however, as a result of the PCI’s increased radicalization, Pacciardi entered the government as Vice-President of the Council of Ministers. Then, from 1948 to 1953 he served as the Minister of Defense. Pacciardi was an antifascist freemason who lived in the United States during World War II.<sup>685</sup> Sforza, also widely suspected in his time as a freemason, had left Italy in 1927 and did not return until 1943. Both were coherently anti-totalitarian in their opposition to Mussolini and the PCI and were strongly in favor of the 1949 Atlantic Pact.<sup>686</sup>

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<sup>683</sup> Dunn to Marshall, November 8, 1947, NARA, RG 84, U.S. Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 19.

<sup>684</sup> C. Sforza “Italy, the Marshall Plan and the “Third Force”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol 26, No 3, April 1948, p. 456.

<sup>685</sup> On Pacciardi, see: A.A. Mola, “Pacciardi massone: iniziazione all’antitotalitarismo”, in *Annali del Centro Pannunzio*, Turin, 2001, pp. 139-150.

<sup>686</sup> As noted by the historians Giuseppe Mammarella and Paolo Cacace, Sforza, along with the Senatore Alfredo Frassati, was one of only two Italian ambassadors to resign in protest over Mussolini’s actions as prime minister. See: G. Mammarella & P. Cacace, *La politica estera dell’Italia dallo Stato unitario ai nostri giorni*, Rome, Laterza, 2006, p. 88.

In the weeks before the election of April 18, 1948, worried officials at the Rome embassy sought the opinions of informed persons regarding the potential outcome. In particular, on April 9, Second Secretary Joseph Greene produced a memorandum of his conversation with Count Leonardo Vitetti whom he described as “especially well-informed on Italian politics” and “supporting Nitti’s right wing National Block.”<sup>687</sup> In the late 1930s, Vitetti had been the General Secretary for Europe and the Mediterranean of the Italian Foreign Office who plotted the April 1939 subjugation of Albania along with Foreign Minister Ciano. Of this prior period the historian Diomede Ivone observes:

As had occurred for the lower levels, in the same way Prunas and Vitetti, ex Foreign Ministers, had divided between themselves, before and during the war, the best assignments and destinations. The same consideration also applies to the lowest levels of the diplomatic-consular career. Furthermore, the Minister Prunas, as all the other “chosen” of the diplomatic-consular career, enjoyed a privileged position thanks to their more complete dedication to fascism.<sup>688</sup>

An expert on the American Civil War, Vitetti had taken a leave of absence from the Foreign Ministry but was rehabilitated by his presence in the post-war Roman aristocracy and family ties which facilitated his relationship with the embassy. In fact First Secretary of the embassy Robert Coe was his brother-in-law. On May 5, 1949, Vitetti was listed as present at the Whip Club along with Prince and Princess Borghese, Prince and Princess Torlonia, Mrs. Dunn, and “numerous people from diplomatic corps and foreign colony.”<sup>689</sup> He later served as the Italian representative to the United Nations from 1956 to 1958.

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<sup>687</sup> The National Block was comprised by the Liberal Party, Uomo Qualunque, and Union for the Reconstruction of Italy.

<sup>688</sup> D. Ivone, *Raffaele Guariglia e la Diplomazia Epurata: Un oscuro capitolo della storia dell'Italia post-fascista (1944-1946)*, Naples, Editoriale scientifica, 2002, pp. 164-165. “Così come era avvenuto per i gradi, allo stesso modo Prunas e Vitetti, ex Ministri degli Esteri, si erano divisi, prima e durante la guerra, i posti e le destinazioni migliori. Le stesse considerazioni valevano anche per i gradini più bassi della carriera diplomatico-consolare. Inoltre, il Ministro Prunas, come tutti gli altri funzionari “eletti” della carriera diplomatico-consolare, godevano di una posizione di privilegio grazie alla loro più completa dedizione al fascismo.”

<sup>689</sup> *Il Tempo*, May 5, 1949.

The paradoxical turn of events regarding fascists in the Italian Foreign Office was captured on May 29 in the diary of FSO Jeff Graham Parsons who as serving in Rome:

From Maritain's we went on to a cocktail by the beautiful Cyprienne del Drago and her husband. More than a faint odor of Fascism around the place, perhaps, but it was full of Italian Foreign Office and others in good standing. A young man, Mazio, who had worked at the Italian consulate in Ottawa and studied at Yale graduate mentioned 'We were perhaps all a little Fascist.' Certainly this is hardly fair to Togliatti, but for many of those who are more to our liking than him it is perhaps a little true.<sup>690</sup>

The statement by Mazio was a rare and noteworthy admission considering the previous comments of embassy secretary William Knight who was unable to find anyone in Italy who admitted to having been a fascist at one time.

In August 1949, the former Italian Ambassador to Turkey Guido Rocco, (Naples 1886-1959) was listed in the reports of the Naples prefecture as an active member of the National Monarchist Party.<sup>691</sup> Rocco had been the General Director for the Foreign Press of the Ministry of Culture and Propaganda in Mussolini's "years of consensus".<sup>692</sup> He later served as the Minister of Popular Culture in the Badoglio Government and was a political contact of Counselor of Embassy Byington in the tumultuous first months of 1950.

In late January 1950, the Ambassador Francesco Taliani, Admiral Tallarigo, and Prince and Princess Alessandro Torlonia attended the cocktail of Edward Page Jr. of the embassy. Taliani was another Italian diplomat that had began his career during fascism but had remained loyal

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<sup>690</sup> J. Graham Parsons, Diary, May 29, 1948, Box 1 Folder 3, Jeff Graham Parsons Papers. The Dragos participated in social life at the Whip Club in this period with elements of the far right. Parsons was the assistant of Myron Taylor, the American envoy to the Vatican. From 1932 to 1936 Parsons had been the private secretary of Joseph C. Grew, one of the founding fathers of the Foreign Service. In Rome, he initially managed the American relationship with Luigi Gedda who had organized the Catholic civic committees which greatly assisted the Christian Democrats in the April 1948 elections. As noted by the historian Deborah Kisatsky, Llewelyn Thompsom the U.S. Minister Counselor in Rome observed in 1951 that Gedda was an "ardent nationalist" who had supported the Uomo Qualunque party in the local elections of 1946. D. Kisatsky, *The United States and the European Right 1945-1955*, Ohio State University Press, 2005, p. 117.

<sup>691</sup> For report on Rocco's political activities in Naples see p. 227.

<sup>692</sup> F.G. Orsini, "La diplomazia italiana dagli 'anni del consenso' al crollo del regime", in *Sulla crisi del regime fascista*, editor Angelo Ventura, Venice, Marsilio, 1993 p. 134.

to the monarchy by refusing to join the diplomatic corps of the Salò Republic. Like many of his colleagues he was not purged from the Foreign Office in the post-war period. Still, Taliani had a “fascist ideological background” which made him a natural choice to become Italy’s first postwar ambassador to Spain in 1951.<sup>693</sup> On the other hand, the Italian envoy to the United States from 1945 to 1955 was the antifascist Alberto Tarchiani who was among the founders of *Giustizia e Libertà*. Clearly, in the immediate postwar period the American public opinion would not have accepted an Italian ambassador compromised with fascism. On a similar note, Ambrogio Donisi, known as the only communist in the Italian Foreign Office, was the Italian Ambassador to Poland in 1948.

The leftover fascist diplomats were the subject of a July 12, 1950, dinner conversation between William Knight of the embassy, Signorina Ruffini (sister-in-law of Leone Cattani), Libio Zeno Zenkovich (Press Officer in the *Ufficio del Gabinetto* of the Italian Foreign Office ) and Paolo Treves, the head of the international office of PSLI. Knight reported:

Ruffini and Treves seemed to be strongly of the opinion that there were far too many ex-Fascists in important positions in the Foreign Office and that many should have been removed long since. Zenkovitch agreed that practically all leading Foreign Office personalities of any stature were once Fascists but added that almost without exception former Fascists were the only intelligent diplomats available. Miss Ruffini pointed out that Guidotti, a first class diplomat, was not tainted in the slightest with Fascism. Zenkovitch concurred but said he was a rare exception. He then went on to say that Italian diplomats below the very top levels are merely skilled technicians who have no control over policy but merely execute the policy laid down by others. [...]

Zenkovich says Sforza’s position on Fascists has been that it is not the responsibility of the Foreign Minister acting administratively to oust them; that if the Government as a whole wishes them ousted, it should lay down its policy and establish a procedure.<sup>694</sup>

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<sup>693</sup> P. del Hierro Lecea, *Spanish-Italian Relations and the Influence of Major Powers: 1943-1957*, New York, Springer, 2014, p. 190.

<sup>694</sup> Knight to Horsey, July 12, 1950, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1946-1964, Box 74.

In the end, the logical conclusion is that the bulk of the responsibility for the situation lies with Prime Minister De Gasperi whom, with the backing of the Vatican, could have terminated the employment of the fascist diplomats. Inaction was justified by the lack of suitably trained replacements.

### **Communists and Neofascists**

In the autumn of 1949, landless farmers began to occupy the *latifondi* in Southern Italy in order to pressure the De Gasperi government into furthering agrarian reform. On October 29, after resisting arrest, two agricultural workers and a woman were shot and killed in the small town of Melissa in Calabria by the *Celere* police force of Interior Minister Scelba. In the following weeks, labor agitation and social unrest spread north resulting in violent episodes in public squares and the reciprocal torching of political party headquarters by communists and neofascists. On March 20, 1950, Dunn summarized the situation in a cable to Secretary of State Acheson:

Public order has deteriorated to such extent to force Government to “recognize need of rigorous enforcement of law and methods available to State to impose upon all respect of democratic procedure.” Question fully discussed by Cabinet in at least three meetings last week. Government communique March 18 states that Government deplors “illegal and unjustifiable” occupation of land, that it approved instructions of Minister Interior that further occupations be prevented and that promoters and organizers be legally punished, and instructions that political authorities not serve as conciliators as long as “illegality and violence” last.<sup>695</sup>

Dunn also noted that an editorial in the socialist organ *Avanti* labeled the measures adopted by the government an “open provocation” and declared that the government was “acting in conformity with the State Department, which is urging French and Italian Governments to trample constitutional principles and become regimes in order eradicate worker movements,

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<sup>695</sup> Dunn to Acheson, March 20, 1950, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1946-1964, Box 74.

insurmountable obstruction to Department's mad war plans."<sup>696</sup> At the time Dunn and Byington considered De Gasperi's government to be somewhat ineffective in its attempts to maintain social order and foster economic growth to reduce the appeal of communism.

On December 6, 1949, William Knight of the embassy reported a conversation with history professor Basilio Cialdea (formerly PSLI) and Leone Cattani (formerly PLI). "With Cattani taking the initiative, both Cattani and Cialdea held forth at great length on the danger of a revival of Fascism with Christian Democrat encouragement. Cattani commented bitterly that that "at the provincial level they're throwing out capable, honest democrats and replacing them with thieving fascist dolts, calling the replacements, 'technicians'."<sup>697</sup> This state of affairs is furthered by the analysis of the historian James Miller:

The Italian government initially delayed and then watered down American reform proposals. De Gasperi and his Christian Democrat lieutenants utilized European Recovery Program (ERP) aid to build up their clientele, reward party loyalty, and reinforce the existing social structure. In spite of the importance that United States officials attached to reform and the strong support that their proposals enjoyed among the parties of the reformist left, American leaders did not force them upon De Gasperi.<sup>698</sup>

Embassy support of the Christian Democrats was a crucial element in the struggle against communism but many American diplomats were far from thrilled with the confessional nature of the party. Still, it is evident that Dunn and Byington in Rome agreed with their colleague, the Director of the Policy Planning Staff George Kennan, who considered a "moralist-juridical mindset" to be the "most grave deficiency" of American diplomatic tradition.<sup>699</sup> In official functions, Ambassador Dunn and Minister Counselor Byington often dealt with Christian Democrats and high military authorities. In other social settings they indulged far right

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<sup>696</sup> Ibid.

<sup>697</sup> Memo of Conversation, William Knight with Leone Cattani and Basilio Cialdea, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 32.

<sup>698</sup> J.E. Miller, *The United States and Italy 1940-1959: The Politics of Stabilization*, p. 251.

<sup>699</sup> G.F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy*, 60th Anniversary Edition, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2012, p. 111.

elements. On January 26, Byington reported on an attack by 200 MSI members on the local Communist Party headquarters at Garbatella. (See Appendix E) As demonstrated by the report, like Dunn, he reported that the appeal of communism was a result of economic inequality. Byington was aware of neofascist activity in Spain as early as January 1950 but did not reveal the source of his “high grade rumor”. He indicated to Washington that in Italy former fascists had learned to accept democracy, in contrast to the Germans who had remained ardent Nazis, citing specifically in this regard the industrial interests who had appreciated Mussolini. Still, he did not mention that the insertion of MSI into the government majority, as noted by the historian Davide Conti, continued to be supported by the large landowners of Southern Italy with which he was in close contact and also by the ecclesiastical structure in the person of embassy contact Luigi Gedda.<sup>700</sup> Two days later Byington observed: “In Parliament the MSI has been playing a double game. On the one hand it has accused the police and the Government of being too weak in their treatment of the Communists. On the other hand it has voted in favor of a Communist motion that the police be deprived of firearms! The MSI would apparently like to be the only armed anti-Communist force.”<sup>701</sup>

On March 1, De Gasperi’s sixth government survived a vote of confidence in the Senate but former Prime Ministers Nitti and Orlando withdrew their support. Two days later, the MSI declared its right to fight “Red aggressiveness” and accused the government of being too weak to protect the Italian people against communism; MSI Deputy Roberto Mieville publicly warned that the party would “pay no attention to De Gasperi’s warning against an attempted Fascist revival.”<sup>702</sup> On March 4, Byington was listed in *Il Tempo* as attending a cocktail at Palazzo Patrizi offered by the Counselor of the French Embassy, Baron Geoffroy de Courcel,<sup>703</sup> Thus, at the same time that the MSI stated it was no longer heeding De Gasperi’s

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<sup>700</sup> See: D. Conti, *L’anima nera della Repubblica: storia del MSI*, Bari, Laterza, 2013, p. 14.

<sup>701</sup> Byington to State Department, January 28, 1950, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1950-1952, Box 75.

<sup>702</sup> “Neo-Fascists Warn Italy”, *New York Times*, March 4, 1950, p. 6.

<sup>703</sup> *Il Tempo*, March 4, 1950. These contacts were not just held by American officials as Marchese Patrizi along with members of the French, Spanish, and English embassies was listed as present at the Whip Club on *Il Tempo* of March 24, 1949. Courcel was a descendant of a large landowning family who had served as Charles De Gaulle’s private secretary in World War II.

warnings about a fascist revival, Byington was at the family home of Costantino Patrizi, the financier of Prince Borghese's X-MAS movement. It is possible that embassy personnel were also in contact with Sir Oswald Mosley: the former head of the British Union of Fascists was in Rome to attend an MSI-sponsored conference and had conferred with Marchese Bernardo Patrizi who had been the Secretary of the "London Fascio" attached to the Italian embassy in 1940.<sup>704</sup> It is possible that for Byington the cocktail party at Palazzo Patrizi was merely an opportunity to gain information to report to Washington. Still, he never indicated a connection to the Patrizi family, Borghese, or Mosley in any reports. It is possible that no reports were written on this activity, or that they have not been declassified.

Three days later, On March 7, Byington reported on discussions of a possible alignment between the Liberal Party, Italian Social Movement and the National Monarchist Party. (See Appendix F) This time, in Guido Rocco and the Marchese Monte della Scaglione, he identified two of his sources of information. As previously noted, Rocco had been the General Director for the Foreign Press of the Ministry of Culture and Propaganda in Mussolini's "years of consensus". In his report, Byington observed that the source of financing for the parties of the right remained a question mark, but he had been a guest at Palazzo Patrizi just days before and must have known that Costantino Patrizi had been identified as a financier of the X-MAS organization due to the report that was forwarded to the embassy in March 1947.

A memorandum of conversation from Second Secretary Knight to Byington on April 26, 1950, documented purported clandestine communist arms shipments to various ports in Sardinia: Olbia, Bosa, Alghero, Arbatax, and Tavallera in Spain in preparation for an eventual revolution in Italy.<sup>705</sup> It was from Frederick W. Knipe, who battled malaria as part of the Rockefeller Foundation in Sardinia, that the embassy came to know of these activities as part of a "Plan K" allegedly outlined by the high-ranking communist Luigi Longo which dictated

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<sup>704</sup> G. Mackin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black: Sir Oswald Mosley and the Resurrection of British Fascism*, London, I.B. Tauris, 2007, p. 102. footnote, p. 175. Chiara Chini has demonstrated that the British Union of Fascists was financed by Mussolini in the 1930s. See: C. Chini, "Fascismo britannico e fascismo italiano. La British union of fascists, Oswald Mosley e i finanziamenti stranieri" *Contemporanea. Rivista di storia dell'800 e del '900*, y. 11, no. 3, 2008, pp. 433-458.

<sup>705</sup> Knight to Byington, April 26, 1950, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1950-1952, Box 75.

the organization of clandestine communist paramilitary units and issued secret orders to infiltrate strategic places and arrest key individuals throughout Italy. According to Knipe's source, a Turk named Ricci who claimed to have been a friend of Longo, the insurgents would be assisted by troops from neighboring Yugoslavia and Albania; Genoa would be the first city attacked while Rome remained a secondary objective.<sup>706</sup>

In 1950, with the loss of China and the successful Soviet test of a nuclear weapon, fear grew in the United States that the West was in danger of losing the Cold War. This perception was fanned by hardline anticommunists in both major American political parties. In this context, the embassy maintained contact with interlocutors who were firmly opposed to calls for Italy to adopt a neutral stance as international events had shaken Western Europe's collective resolve in the face of communist aggression. Prince Borghese joined the MSI in 1951, Cy Sulzberger, Byington's friend, wrote in the *New York Times* on May 29, 1951: "Rumors circulated in Italy this spring that Britain's Sir Oswald Mosley sought to interest the Italian Social movement in joining an international fascist organization but that Italian neo-Fascists spurned the offer. Mosley visited Argentina last year ostensibly on a business trip for a publishing house."<sup>707</sup> On Mosley's trip to Argentina, the *New York Times* had commented on November 1, 1950: "There are reports that he will make contact with the many German, French, Belgian, Italian and other European Nazis and Fascists."<sup>708</sup>

Ambassador Dunn remained in Italy until he was reassigned to Paris in March 1952. According to the previously cited CIA report on Borghese's political activities, rumor spread in 1951 that Borghese had contacts with Americans such as "Ambassador Dunn, the mayor of New York and his wife, etc.) as well as with Peron in Argentina."<sup>709</sup> The same report noted that Borghese had been given responsibility for relations between the MSI and Achille Lauro's monarchists in 1952, and had gone to England the following year to "request financial aid for

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<sup>706</sup> Ricci was the General Secretary of the Socialist Workers' Party in Olbia.

<sup>707</sup> "Fascists Clinging to Hope of Returning to Power", *New York Times*, May 29, 1951, p. 8.

<sup>708</sup> "Mosley Going to Argentina", *New York Times*, November 1, 1950, p. 16.

<sup>709</sup> Francis Meloy to Unknown CIA Chief of Station, June 7, 1963, Available at CIA FOIA website: [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO\\_0022.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO_0022.pdf) Accessed November 26, 2016.

the MSI from the Mosley group. He then took part in the MSI electoral campaign with a busy round of electoral rallies.”<sup>710</sup> Another CIA report dated February 1952 stated: “A confidential informant reports that Valerio Borghese a few weeks ago, met secretly in Paris with American emissaries, not identified, but probably elements of the American intelligence service, for the purpose of examining the Italian political situation.”<sup>711</sup>

### **Conclusions on Ambassador Dunn**

Like his predecessor Alexander Kirk, the memory of the Treaty of Versailles’ remained with Dunn who argued for a lenient peace with Italy. Both men shared a similar conservative anticommunist outlook but Dunn was a much more influential figure for a number of reasons. First, he was extremely active in the field of representation, traveling throughout Italy to give speeches about the Marshall Plan in the lead-up to the April 1948 elections whereas Kirk concentrated his representation on the Roman aristocracy with which he had close ties dating back to 1928. Dunn, a minister plenipotentiary in the true sense of the term, firmly established himself as the leading man in Rome despite the presence of ERP director Zellerbach. On the other hand Kirk had played a secondary role to Admiral Stone and did not have full official powers in the armistice regime. Previously, in 1946, the most important decisions regarding Italy took place at the Council of Foreign Ministers and Italian internal politics were not considered of primary importance to the Truman administration. In terms of personnel, American ambassadors in the 1940s ran their mission as they saw fit and the State Department did not have the capability to keep tabs on the daily activities of its envoys. Dunn developed an extremely capable staff of career diplomats with significant experience in Italy whereas Kirk did not maximize the capabilities of his staff, and chose to depend on two officers, one of which, Carmel Offie, was his intimate, while the other, John Goshie, broke State Department rules and damaged embassy morale.

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<sup>710</sup> Ibid.

<sup>711</sup> Memorandum for Deputy Director (Plans) February 1952, [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO\\_0011.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO_0011.pdf) Accessed November 28, 2016.

Publicly, Dunn followed the Truman administration's foreign policy of supporting the democratic elements of the socialist party that he outlined prior to his arrival in December 1946. The embassy did work with the social democrats and frequently encouraged exponents of the PSLI and PSU to join together. Still, given the high level embassy contacts with monarchist and neofascist elements and the ideological proclivities of Dunn and Byington, it is evident that they would not have been distraught if a strong center-left government did not develop. The Rome duo did not strongly push reforms on De Gasperi, in some cases because they were personally opposed to them. It is interesting to note that in his dispatches to Washington such as that of June 23, 1949, Dunn continued to argue for the inclusion of all anticommunist parties in the government majority, including the Saragat socialists.<sup>712</sup> In light of the embassy's contacts with the far right this seems incongruous and it is interesting to reflect again on Eleanor Roosevelt's words regarding Dunn after the latter became Assistant Secretary of State in 1944, in short that he was "clever enough to tell you he will do what you want' while pursuing his own agenda."<sup>713</sup>

Characteristic of the situation is an oral interview with James Mocerì who was born in Seattle in 1916 and studied at Benedetto Croce's Italian Institute of Historical Studies in Naples on a Fulbright scholarship in 1949-1950.<sup>714</sup> When recalling his decision to take the Foreign Service exam, Mocerì explained his interpretation of American foreign policy toward Italy under Ambassador Dunn:

I discussed the possibility with my Italian friends. They urged me to give it serious consideration because they felt that, if I joined the American Foreign Service in Italy, they would have a contact who at least knew the ABCs of Italian political life. [...] These were people, young people, best defined as members of the Italian democratic center, outside of the confessional party, the Christian Democratic Party. The

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<sup>712</sup> Dunn to Hickerson, June 23, 1949, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 45.

<sup>713</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt to FDR, December 4, 1944, FDRI, cited in M. Beschloss, *The Conquerors: Roosevelt, Truman and the Destruction of Hitler's Germany (1941-1945)*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 2002, p. 192.

<sup>714</sup> He majored in political science at the University of Washington and attended graduate school at Columbia University.

feeling in these circles was that Americans in Italy talked to democrats but slept with the Fascists. I found their arguments persuasive, and decided, if I could be of help in furthering what I viewed as the common cause of the United States and the kind of Italy that I cared about, it would be worth making some contribution.<sup>715</sup>

It must be clear, however, that while the embassy wanted a strong centralized government, it was not interested in restoring a nationalist government resembling the Fascist regime, especially given the growing American military footprint in Italy. Again, Byington had been in Naples during the apex of pre-war nationalist fascist aggression which eventually resulted in the rupture of diplomatic relations between the two nations. From 1949 onward, acceptance of NATO was an obligatory condition of American acceptance; the National Monarchist Party considered the alliance necessary and Byington's strong support of the deposed monarchy continued for many years. On the other hand, an undeclared pact with the MSI could only be an emergency solution for driving the communists out of ministerial positions and city administrations. The Marshall Plan, the American intervention in the election of 1948, Italy's membership in NATO and the establishment of American military bases in Italy from 1949 onward meant that the embassy was charged with protecting a long-term relationship. Therefore, Dunn and Byington developed ties with reliable interlocutors who shared a similar conservative and paternalistic worldview. In the economic field, the long-term results of the Marshall Plan were extraordinary. Politically, the development in Italy of two stridently ideological camps with their separate social worlds was a microcosm of the Cold War. The embassy's indulgence of the far right continued to reinforce the narrative that the American government was favorable to reactionary political elements that were opposed to reform.

Chiefs of mission were chosen for their compatibility with the host society. In this way Ambassador Dunn's weakness for high class European manners was an asset. It is no coincidence that he later served as Ambassador to Spain and that the two Mediterranean

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<sup>715</sup> ADST interview, James Mocerri with G. Lewis Schmidt, May 22, 1990.

countries were grouped together in the geographic organization of the State Department.<sup>716</sup> Byington was recalled to Washington D.C. in May 1950 where he took over from his long-time friend Douglas MacArthur II as Deputy Director of the Office of Western European Affairs, becoming director shortly thereafter. He was substituted in Rome by the career diplomat Llewellyn Thompson who had been serving as Assistant Secretary of State. For the American representation in Italy, a new phase began with the U.N. intervention in Korea starting in June 1950. The communists and socialists were put on the defensive as they were forced to attempt to justify communist aggression overseas while the embassy attempted to analyze Italian public opinion regarding the U.N. intervention in Korea .

### **3.5 Political Reports from Naples, 1947-1949**

In Naples, the winter of 1946-1947 was the hardest faced by the city population since the conclusion of the war. In the summer of 1945 between 20,000 and 30,000 citizens had lost their jobs due to the reduction of Allied military activity in the area and new employment opportunities were lacking. The city population faced a high cost of living and an alimentary crisis while the UNRRA mission was scheduled to conclude at the end of 1946. In the local elections of November the major reduction in support for the Christian Democrats demonstrated the dissatisfaction for the result of the June 2 referendum.<sup>717</sup> Consul General Brandt observed that the right wing parties had built a united front to block the possibility that the city was governed by the left, a development indicative of the emerging Cold War logic but also an attempt by conservative elements to obstruct badly needed social reform and the modernization of economic development.

The lawyer Giuseppe Buonocore, born in Formia in 1876, became Mayor of Naples on December 12, 1946. At the time he was also a deputy in the Constituent Assembly from the

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<sup>716</sup> The Italian hands also served in Spain but were less well-versed on Spanish society. Politics conditions under Franco's dictatorship were much easier to understand and document than the Italian political system.

<sup>717</sup> The results in Naples were: Uomo Qualunque together with the monarchists and liberals at 53%, the Popular Block at 31,15% and the Christian Democrats at 13,16%. See: P. Lezzi, *Pagine socialiste*, Naples, Guida Editori, 2002. pp. 43-44.

National Block of Liberty list. The journalist Antonio Ghirelli describes him as a “monarchist of Catholic extraction who had previously participated in democratic political movements”.<sup>718</sup> Thus, the beginning of Buonocore’s tenure preceded Ambassador Dunn’s arrival in Rome by a month. Still, the mayor did not announce his program for the city until January 31, 1947, six weeks after his nomination. It appears that his lack of urgency in improving the living conditions in the city was designed to create unrest and provoke the parties of the political left as the resulting civil disorder might necessitate the return of King Umberto II to restore order. As noted by the Prefect Ventura on April 22:

The citizenry scarcely participates in the life of local political movements whose activities remain rather moderate. The recent ban on the exhibition of materials displaying the deposed monarchy and the new measures for the defense of the Republic have not had a noticeable impact in this province. There have not been important symptoms of neofascist activity. The grave situation of the economic of Southern Italy has sharpened the contrast between the social classes which have increasingly adopted clear positions to protect their respective interests.<sup>719</sup>

Consul Frederick Jandrey summarized the situation in July: “Although the population of Naples is surprisingly indifferent to its municipal government, it is generally accepted that the Buonocore administration has been one of the least able that has ever controlled municipal affairs.”<sup>720</sup> The prefect reported on the morning of July 6 that the scheduled manifestation

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<sup>718</sup> A. Ghirelli, *Napoli dalla guerra a Bassolino: 1943-1998*, Naples, Esselibri, 1998, p. 48. “un monarchico di estrazione cattolica che ha militato a suo tempo in formazioni democratiche [...] Al di là della sua indubbia professionalità, l’elezione di Buonocore è un segnale che va nella stessa direzione dell’estromissione della sinistra dalla maggioranza di governo con la conseguente costituzione di una maggioranza centrista intorno al presidente del Consiglio democristiano.”

<sup>719</sup> Ventura to Interior Ministry, April 22, 1947, ACS, Ministero Dell’Interno, Gabinetto 1947, Busta 35, Fascicolo 129, “Napoli. Situazione politica ed economica della provincia.” La cittadinanza partecipa con scarso interesse alla vita dei movimenti politici locali, la cui attività si mantiene piuttosto moderata. Il recente divieto dell’esposizione dei cimballi della decaduta monarchia e le nuove disposizioni per la difesa della Repubblica non hanno avuto, nell’ambito di questo provincia, ripercussioni degne di rilievo. Non si sono inoltre avuti sintomi importanti di attività neofascista. Il grave disagio in cui si dibatte l’economia del Mezzogiorno ha acuito il contrasto tra le classi sociali, le quali vanno assumendo posizioni sempre più nette, per tutela dei rispettivi interessi.

<sup>720</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for July 1947 by Frederick W. Jandrey, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

organized by the Neapolitan Africanist Committee took place at the *Maschio Angioino* castle. “Speakers are Mayor Buonocore, the Honorable Guido Cortese and Mr. Pignatelli. They claim Italy’s right to reacquire its colonies lost in the war. 2000 people present.”<sup>721</sup> It is unclear exactly which of the many Pignatelli the dispatch refers to, but it must be noted that the well-known far right agitator Prince Valerio Pignatelli was active in Southern Italy in this period.

After the passage of the law for the defense of the Republic in November 1947 the new prefect Paternò reported to the Ministry of the Interior on November 29:

A new section of the Italian Monarchist Party was founded in Via Luca Giordano n.98. Present are the Honorable Covelli, the Prince Caracciolo, in addition around one-hundred in attendance. Covelli speaks, and affirms, in contrast to the statement made by Arturo Labriola at the Constituent Assembly in Rome, that the monarchist sentiment in Naples is stronger than ever and that the monarchists’ loyalty to the Republic is dictated by the desire to maintain peace and tranquility in the country. The same day a new section of the Italian Monarchist Union was inaugurated in Via Cavallerizza a Chiaia n.137. Mayor Buonocore spoke in front of about 50 people.<sup>722</sup>

As we have seen, Naples Consul General George Brandt (1944-1949) had repeatedly and unsuccessfully requested additional personnel in 1946 to produce political reports. Consular reporting was given the lowest priority due to the presence of the Allied Headquarters in nearby Caserta, and the Allied Commission of Admiral Stone and embassy in Rome. Furthermore, until July 31, 1946, Naples was still under Allied Military Government and

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<sup>721</sup> Ventura to Interior Ministry, July 6, 1947, ACS, Ministero Dell’Interno, Gabinetto Partiti, 1944-1947, Partiti monarchici, Busta 175, Fascicolo 422P. “ha luogo a Maschio Angioino la preannunciata manifestazione indetta dal Comitato Africanista Napoletano. Parlano il sindaco Buonocore, On. Guido Cortese ed il sig. Pignatelli. Riaffermano il diritto dell’Italia di riavere le sue colonie. 2000 persone presenti.”

<sup>722</sup> Paternò to Interior Ministry, November 29, 1947, ACS, Ministero Dell’Interno - Gabinetto Partiti - 1944-1947 partiti monarchici Busta 175 Fascicolo 422P. È stata fondata una nuova sede sezionale del Partito monarchico italiano in Via Luca Giordano n.98. Presenti sono l’onorevole Covelli, il Principe Caracciolo nonché di un centinaio di persone. Prende la parola Covelli, e contrariamente alla dichiarazione fatta di Arturo Labriola alla Costituente a Roma afferma che il sentimento monarchico a Napoli è più forte che mai e che la fedeltà dei monarchici verso la Repubblica è dettata dalla volontà di salvaguardare la pace e la tranquillità del paese. Lo stesso giorno è stata inaugurata una sede dell’Unione monarchica italiana in Via Cavallerizza a Chiaia n.137. Sono intervenuti il sindaco Buonocore e circa 50 persone.

social representation in Naples paled in comparison to the prewar period when the Prince and Princess of Piedmont had resided in the Villa Maria Pia.

The signing of the Italian Peace Treaty on February 10, 1947, concluded the armistice regime and brought to an end the various overlapping Allied organizations; at the end of February the last monthly military counterintelligence report was forwarded to the embassy by Consul General Brandt which documented how local Neapolitan politics affected the central government in Rome and vice-versa, particularly in light of the reemergence of Achille Lauro: “The Saragat socialists are using the newspaper, “Roma”, whose director Arturo Labriola is sympathetic to the cause. An unverified report has it that Achille LAURO, local shipowner is supporting the movement to the tune of many millions of lire.”<sup>723</sup> Lauro had recently been released from the Allied prison in Terni, and was in search of political support to rebuild his shipbuilding empire. In May 1, 1946, report by the Naples Counter Intelligence office sent to Byington in Caserta, Lauro was characterized as a man of “prestige, wealth, and administrative capability.”<sup>724</sup> The 72 year old Labriola had been listed by American counterintelligence in the autumn of 1945 as a member of a politically active Masonic organization along with General Bencivenga which was the force behind Francesco Saverio Nitti’s attempt to substitute Ferruccio Parri as Prime Minister.<sup>725</sup>

With the post-treaty normalization of relations it is evident that the embassy under Ambassador Dunn with his formidable cast of Foreign Service officers intended to dominate political reporting. The first independent report from the Naples Consulate General signed by

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<sup>723</sup> Counterintelligence Report February 1, 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

<sup>724</sup> Records of the Political Advisor to the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, General Records 1946, Box 116. The May 1946 report highlighted the incongruence Lauro’s reported 2,000,000 lire contribution to keep the communist newspaper *La Voce* from failing. At the time Lauro was looking for political backing. This led to speculation that the communists were using the former fascist in a way to signal to other former fascist hierarchs that they were welcome in the PCI.

<sup>725</sup> Labriola born in Naples in 1873, and founder of *Avanguardia socialista* in 1902 in Milan in opposition to the opening of Filippo Turati to the liberals. From 1913 onward, Labriola was a representative in the Chamber of Deputies as an independent socialist, and supported Italy’s entrance into the First World War. In 1926 he collaborated with Giuseppe Saragat at *Quarto Stato*, the antifascist magazine founded by Pietro Nenni and Carlo Rosselli. Labriola, a self-declared freemason, had chosen exile in 1931 before returning to Italy in 1935. He supported the Italian invasion in Ethiopia with a letter lauding Mussolini.

Brandt covered the month of April 1947. The following month, the consulate's political report was written by Frederick Jandrey who had lauded Mussolini in 1939 and was a friend of Prince Caracciolo of the City Council. Jandrey's report documented municipal politics and received the praise of his close friend in Rome, First Secretary Jones who commented that "the coalition of political parties in the local government and their success or failure is always of interest."<sup>726</sup> In the same telegram, Jones observed that in accordance with the recommendations of Foreign Service Inspector Cochran, Ambassador Dunn would circulate a directive to the consulates underlining the requirement for future political reports. Despite Jones' warm words, four months had passed since Dunn's arrival in Rome and the delay demonstrates that consular reporting was not valued at the highest level in Via Veneto. From 1947 to 1949 there is no record of comments by Counselor Byington or Ambassador Dunn on the reports produced by the consulate general which chronicled a difficult economic situation, chronic strikes, and the question of the Mezzogiorno.

#### **April 1947 - Naples Consul General Political Report - signed by Brandt<sup>727</sup>**

The present City Government of Prof. Buonocore [...] having begun the month of April in an atmosphere of impending crisis with the resignation of the Qualunquist leader, Calabrese, the vice-mayor, as well as two other members of the Giunta, ended the month threatened with extinction following a non-confidence motion put by the Popular Block and the Liberal members of the City Council. The non-confidence motion came about as a result of the proposal of the Monarchist-Uomo Qualunque administration to delay even further approval of an expenditure of 56,000,000 lire already made available by a ministerial decree dated September 27, 1946 for the construction of a maritime road skirting the port area of Naples and considered by practically all interested groups as a sound project which would serve to reduce unemployment in Naples. This non-confidence vote was the culmination of a long period of dissatisfaction with the Buonocore Administration which is now considered to be virtually dead.

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<sup>726</sup> Jones to Jandrey, May 25, 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1954 Box 18. Jones and Jandrey were friends and had been roommates in Calcutta, India.

<sup>727</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the month of April 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

On April 28-29, Ambassador Dunn and Deputy Chief of Mission Byington visited Naples where they met Mayor Buonocore, the Prefect Ventura, and the Naples City Council where Byington's friend Prince Caracciolo represented the monarchist party. Another councilman, Gustavo Verde was close to former King Umberto II. Brandt had specifically requested that Byington accompany Dunn on the trip to Naples. Mayor Buonocore had been one of the founders of the Naples Tennis Club in 1905 where Homer Byington Sr. of the consulate won various tournaments and awards. Due to the decades long family experience in Naples, it is likely that Byington Jr. was familiar with the new mayor before the visit. The political report from the Naples Consulate General noted:

On April 28 and 29, neofascist propaganda was found on large posters hung from the walls of the city. Some students were taken into police custody. The antifascist parties reacted immediately, asking the prefect to terminate the employee who had authorized the distribution of the materials. On April 30, in the *Risorgimento* it was reported that 29 members of the Constituent Assembly asked the Minister of the Interior what he intended to do regarding the prefect of Naples who had authorized the diffusion of fascist propaganda.

While it is impossible to ascertain the responsibility for the fascist propaganda, its manifestation in Naples at the time of Dunn and Byington's visit fits in with the widely held belief in the area that the American authorities preferred a right-wing government in Italy.

#### **July 1-15 - Naples Consul General Political Report - William E. Flournoy Jr.<sup>728</sup>**

Consul Jandrey wrote the report for the first half of July before his reassignment to Washington D.C. at the end of the month.

The strong interest in the Marshall Plan demonstrated in June continued in the first two weeks of July with a particular emphasis that Italy participated in the plan as an equal partner.

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<sup>728</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of July 1-15, 1947, NARA RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

In general in Naples, the businessmen are pleased by the action taken by the De Gasperi government to improve the economic situation. However, the high cost of life and food crisis are observed with growing alarm.

The comments on the Marshall Plan follow party lines. *Il Domani d'Italia* attributes the failure of the negotiations between the West and the Soviet bloc on the Soviet desire to maintain an iron grip on its own satellite countries. *La Voce* asserts that it is not yet a plan and that it seems like an ultimatum. [...]

The most followed event was the July 10th visit of the Minister of the Merchant Marine to Naples where he met the mayor, the prefect and the president of the Chamber of Commerce and the port authority representatives. After an inspection of the port facilities the minister met with workers and shipbuilders. Achille Lauro emphasized the necessity to reimburse the shipbuilders for the ships lost in the war. He states that it is not possible to build the necessary number of ships with the limited funds available. He asks for more funds for the shipbuilders and to buy more liberty ships from the United States, while criticizing the high price of oil in the Italian ports with respect to their Mediterranean competitors. Lauro's newspaper the *Risorgimento* has conducted a long campaign against the preferential treatment given to Genoa regarding passenger ships with emigrants bound for the Americas. He insists that all ships of this kind must make a stop in Naples. The government is trying to accommodate the large number of people who want to move to Argentina.

*Risorgimento* which is partially owned by Achille Lauro was founded under Allied supervision after the liberation of Naples and has always been proud to offer an independent point of view. However, with Corrado Alvaro as director of the newspaper it has taken on a left-leaning point of view, and its circulation has subsequently declined in Naples. On July 15, Alvaro resigned from the paper after a disagreement with the owners of the paper which led to the firing of Aldo Paladini, Alvaro's trusted chief editor.

Lauro was not pleased with the left-leaning political viewpoint adopted. Although Alvaro is not a communist one of his closest friends in Naples is Mario Alicata, the director of the *Voce*.

## July 15 - August 15, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>729</sup>

As was mentioned in the last report, Corrado Alvaro, editor of *Risorgimento* resigned effective July 15th. The new editor, Alberto Consiglio, a Neapolitan, [...] is understood to have formerly worked for *Il Tempo* in Rome and contributed articles to *Uomo Qualunque*. Although one source reports that Consiglio had a record of underground activities during the war not in connection with the Communist partigiani, a Saragat Socialist source claims that he has a pro-Fascist background.

Consiglio asserted in an editorial on July 17 that: “this paper under my direction will remain strictly faithful to its character — an independent and democratic organ of information and constructive criticism.” Whether the paper is actually independent is debatable but one thing is clear, that it has veered to the Right since Consiglio took charge. He defended this shift of policy in an editorial on August 5th [...] he stated that a Neapolitan newspaper with a large circulation must follow more or less the opinion of the majority of Neapolitans and Southern Italians and that as the bulk of Southern Italian electors did not choose the Left in the last elections, *Risorgimento* does not follow that orientation.

During the period covered by this report, the paper has carried on an almost fanatically nationalistic campaign against the ratification of the Peace Treaty, has strongly criticized Soviet Russia and its influence especially in the Balkans and has emphasized disagreements between the United States and Soviet Russia. It has vigorously criticized the De Gasperi Government while at the same time giving De Gasperi's speeches and statements full coverage. Support has been given to the Marshall Plan and full and favorable publicity was given to all American steps to aid Italy. The paper has continued its previous campaign to solve the food problem and to fully publicized what it terms the problem of the South.

*Risorgimento* was the most widely distributed paper in Southern Italy. The report reveals the difficulty faced by consular personnel in ascertaining the role played by public figures like Consiglio during the Fascist regime. Once again the American consular representation is dependent on a PSLI member for information.

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<sup>729</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of July 15-August 15, 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1954, Box 18.

**August 15-31, Naples Consulate General Political Report signed by Brandt for George D. LaMont<sup>730</sup>**

Carlo Basile, ex-Prefect of Genoa and Undersecretary of War in Mussolini's Fascist Republican Government, was recently tried in Naples for crimes committed as a Fascist official during the war. On August 29, 1947, he was granted an amnesty by the court and subsequently rearrested because of a threat of strikes in Genoa and other places in Italy. [...] The amnesty was granted at the request of the public prosecutor.

Basile was sentenced to be shot when captured by the Partisans in April 1945. He was reprieved twice and then sentenced to twenty years imprisonment by a court in Milan. This sentence was appealed by the prosecution and he was retried at Pavia, where he was sentenced to death. On an appeal from this sentence, he was retried in Venice but as this trial was interrupted by a mob intent on lynching him, his case was transferred to Naples.<sup>731</sup>

The report offers no judgement on the situation as why Naples was chosen for the site of the trial and the public reaction in the city. As noted by the diplomatic historian Graham Stuart: "A good diplomat should attempt to interpret the facts to the best of his ability."<sup>732</sup>

**September 1-15, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>733</sup>**

A shipload of American wheat sent to Italy under the American relief program for Italy arrived in Naples September 9, 1947. The United States Ambassador, the Honorable James C. Dunn, visited Naples on that day together with the Prime Minister, De Gasperi, and in a ceremony handed over the wheat to the latter. [...] The wheat was badly

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<sup>730</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of August 15-31, 1947, NARA RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1954, Box 18.

<sup>731</sup> Basile was ultimately sentenced to three years confinement.

<sup>732</sup> G.H. Stuart, *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*, p. 172.

<sup>733</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of September 1-15, 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

needed in this region and it should assure at least a continuance of present bread and pasta rations for the present.

#### **October 1-15, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>734</sup>**

On October 14, 1947, Representative John D. Lodge gave a press interview in Naples which was very favorably received. Present were representatives of the various newspapers and press services in Naples including a correspondent of the local Communist newspaper, "LA VOCE". Representative Lodge told them that he had taken considerable interest in the problems of Italy and had helped in getting the present aid to Italy program through the American Congress. He said he regretted the non-participation of Russia and certain other countries in the Marshall Plan and pointed out that a difference must be made between relief and rehabilitation. The former could be given by an individual country but reconstruction required the cooperation of all. The presentative of the Communist newspaper "LA VOCE" asked him whether the United States would continue its friendship and aid to Italy if a government of the extreme left came into power through normal electoral processes. Representative Lodge said that the great majority of Americans are anti-Communist and he believed they would not view with favor the advent of a Communist regime in Italy. If they came into power in Italy through the free will of the Italian people, without outside influence or pressure, he thought it would have no effect on American aid provided free elections continued to be held. He emphasized the latter saying he had noticed too often that with the advent of Communists to power free elections ceased.

His interview was given favorable publicity in the non-Communist newspapers but nothing regarding it appeared in the Communist newspaper "LA VOCE". It was afterwards learned that "LA VOCE" received instructions from Communist headquarters not to print anything regarding the interview.

Representative Lodge gave his interview in Italian and this together with his pleasing personality and informality created a very favorable impression.

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<sup>734</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of October 1-15, 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy, Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

Lodge, the Republican congressman from Connecticut, was the nephew of Henry Cabot Lodge who led the fight against the U.S. membership in the League of Nations. He was married to the Italian actress Francesca Braggiotti, whose family owned a large villa on the hill of Montughi in Florence. On April 14, 1948, just prior to the political elections in Italy, he gave a speech in Congress insisting that the Soviet Union release 24,000 missing Italians from the war. After Dwight Eisenhower's victory in the presidential election of 1952, widespread rumors indicated that Lodge, then Governor of Connecticut, would have become the U.S. Ambassador to Italy; a *New York Times* article on December 4, 1952, indicated that he was interested in the nomination.<sup>735</sup> In the end, Eisenhower chose Clare Boothe-Luce, who had been Lodge's predecessor as U.S. Representative of the 4th Connecticut district from 1943-1947.

#### **October 16-31, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>736</sup>**

The editor of *La Voce* (Communist), Mario Alicata, was fined 10,000 lire for libel and engaged in two duels during the two week period covered by this report. [...] The duels both with swords took place between Alicata and two of the editors of the Liberal paper, *Il Giornale*, Carlo Zaghi and Giuseppe Vorluni. Vorluni was slightly wounded in the duel with Alicata while the latter was himself wounded slightly in his encounter with Zaghi. [...] The antipathy between Alicata and Vorluni is not new as in May of 1945 they accused each other of being Fascists and later engaged in other verbal exchanges.<sup>737</sup> Although Alicata had apparently been challenged to a duel on several occasions by Vorluni, all previous challenges had reportedly been refused on the ground that the Communist party forbade its members to resort to such methods of resolving quarrels. Journalist circles report, however, that in this case Togliatti gave permission.

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<sup>735</sup> "Seeking No Post, Gov. Lodge Insists", *New York Times*, December 4, 1952, p. 43.

<sup>736</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of October 15-31, 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

<sup>737</sup> A footnote states: Both might be considered as sympathetic to Fascism. Alicata is reported to have been Littore in Culture (Fascist culture) while at the University of Rome as well as author of an Anthology of Italian Literature dedicated to Mussolini. At one time he also contributed articles to the newspaper *Il Primato Degli Italiani* which was owned by Galeazzo Ciano. Vorluni was before the war associated with *Il Corriere Di Napoli* where he wrote a column in answer to British propaganda.

The dissensions within the Uomo Qualunque party and Nenni-Socialist parties has recently caused considerable comment in political and journalistic circles in Naples. It has been the opinion of a large number of people from that very first that Uomo Qualunque, being made up of a motley group, including among others, former Fascists, Monarchists who do not wish to be members of a Monarchist party, and many persons opposed to the former Committee of National Liberation, would fall apart one fine day. Recent events such as the resignation from the party of Mazza, Russo Perez and others seem to confirm this prophecy. Arturo Labriola, the editor of *Roma* and a former Socialist has remarked in his paper that "it is not difficult to see why the members of Uomo Qualunque fight among themselves. In finding a way for each to follow his own path, that is his own caprice, they do not know where to turn." *La Voce* asserted that Uomo Qualunque was falling apart partly because the largest industrialists of the north, the construction interests of Rome, and the large landowners and black marketers of Southern Italy who had made the original contribution for the formation of Giannini's party had transferred their monetary allegiance to the Christian Democrats.

None of the local press seemed to weep any tears over what seemed to be the impending demise of Uomo Qualunque except *Risorgimento* (Independent) whose editor, Alberto Consiglio, [...] asserted that Uomo Qualunque had become a democratic party, an interpreter of a particular and incontestable tendency of public opinion. He insisted that there is need for a large third party in Italy made up of what he calls the middle class and that if Uomo Qualunque collapses it will merely mean that another group will have to take its place. He, therefore, called on the leaders of the party to settle their differences in a democratic manner. It is reported in journalistic circles that Consiglio was recently sent to Rome by Achille Lauro, the local shipowner and part owner of S.E.M. (Società Editrice Meridionale) which publishes most of the newspapers in Naples, with twenty million lire to contribute to the Uomo Qualunque party if Giannini would drop his opposition to De Gasperi's government.

In contrast with Consiglio's position that a third party on the right is required, Arturo Labriola asserted in an editorial on October 20 in *Roma* (Also owned by S.E.M.) that a third party taking a center position between the "Rightist" Christian Democrats and the Left is necessary. Labriola's name has been linked with Nitti's in the creation of a new third party. The general opinion seems to be that both Nitti and Labriola are old men who failed to do anything for Italian democracy in the early 20's when they were young and prominent political figures and who certainly will not now be able to form a party which can gain any

considerable sector of the Italian vote. Labriola who is a Neapolitan 72 years old, and who was a Socialist before Fascism, is known for his extreme independence of thought both in the political and journalist fields.

Neapolitan journalistic circles, especially those of Leftist tendencies, consider the appointment some time ago of Arturo Assante, the editor of *Il Corriere Di Napoli*, as General Manager of the Società Editrice Meridionale (S.E.M.) as an important step in Lauro's tightening of his control of this company. It is understood that Assante is to have both administrative and editorial control of the company which publishes *Risorgimento*, *Roma*, and *Il Corriere di Napoli*. This, if true, represents a change in the policy previously followed by which the editors of the individual papers have been allowed a more or less free editorial policy. Assante was editor of *Il Corriere Di Napoli* and correspondent of Mussolini's daily *Popoli D'Italia* during Fascism. He was also reportedly a member of the O.V.R.A. (Fascist secret police). Despite Assante's supposed editorial contro, Arturo Labriola, the editor of *Roma*, an exile under Fascism, is still following an independent line editorially.

#### **November 1-15, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>738</sup>**

The local press carried accounts of the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly in which demise of Giannini's *Buonsenso* was discussed by Deputy Virgilio Nasi and others. Nasi's statement that *Risorgimento*, the most important newspaper of the SEM group in Naples, changed its editorial policy from one of opposition to one of support of the Christian Democrats as a result of pressure from the government elicited much comment from *Risorgimento*. Alberto Consiglio, editor of *Risorgimento*, asserted his independence in a long statement published in his paper on November 11.

An open letter to the Deputy Nasi from Achille Lauro was printed in the same paper on November 12 in which he took pains to explain that he joined the Fascist Party in 1933 to save his business from certain Fascist elements. Said he couldn't understand what they meant by a subsidized press as he could not subsidize himself. He claimed that the SEM has a 2,000,000 lire deficit each month which he makes up from his own pocket. He went on to explain that he had purchased his interest in the Società Editrice Meridionale in 1942 as the Bank of

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<sup>738</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of November 1-15, 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

Naples wished to lighten the burden of management and avoid that the paper fall into the hands of northern industrialists. He asserted that he had tried many times to return his shares of stock to the Bank of Naples without success.

**November 16-30, Naples Consulate General Political Report - signed by Brandt for Flournoy<sup>739</sup>**

Following the demonstration on November 13, the organization of an anti-Fascist League to defend the Republic and democracy was announced on November 14 listing as its supporters a group of local Communists and Nenni Socialists as well as Floriano del Secolo, former editor of *Risorgimento*, Gennaro Fermariello, former mayor of Naples under the Allied Military Government and Vincenzo Dattilo, local ANSA agent who claims to have reestablished the Republican Party in Naples upon the liberation of the city. [...]

Del Secolo was originally made editor of *Risorgimento* by the Allied Publications Board but was dismissed from his position by Achille Lauro who recently appointed Consiglio, generally considered to have been a Fascist sympathizer, to the editorship. Del Secolo like Dattilo and Fermariello is known for his anti-Fascist sentiments and would naturally be disposed to join an organization opposed to Fascist activities. [...]

It is too early to determine whether the League is actually a Communist-front organization as some circles have asserted. If it becomes a Communist instrument, the more prominent members from other parties can be expected to resign.

**December 1-15, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>740</sup>**

The City Administration of Mayor Buonocore rode out several stormy sessions of the City Council arising out of the scandals of the milk central and the tramway system. In the case of the milk central, the charge was made that the required amount of milk was not being delivered to the central and that the producers were making large profits on the sale outside of the milk not turned in. As for the tramway system,

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<sup>739</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of November 16-30, 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

<sup>740</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of December 1-15, 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

the scandal grew out of the acceptance of certain material not up to specifications. The Popular Bloc which had denounced the milk central scandal called for immediate cancellation of the contract but it was decided to investigate instead. In the case of the tramway affair the Popular Bloc proposed a vote of no confidence which was defeated and the Christian Democrats suggestion of an investigating committee was approved. This did not prevent the resignation of the assessor in charge of the tramway system, Ing. Eugenio Arpino (Uomo Qualunque).

*Roma* (Leftist Independent) after a long silence accused the City Administration of mishandling city affairs and of throwing out Arpino to save the face of the Administration. *La Voce* also accused the administration of hushing up irregularities in the food ration office.

Although the position of the City Administration is continually threatened it will probably be able to stay in power until the next elections, as long as its opposition consisting of the Christian Democratic members and the Popular Bloc are divided.

#### **December 16-31, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>741</sup>**

The meetings of the City Council were enlivened by the announcement by Mayor Buonocore on December 16 that he would resign his post due to the provision of the Constitution prohibiting the mayors of capitals of provinces from being candidates for deputy at the next election. The press showed great interest in the announcement. *Roma* said that the Mayor had no intention of resigning and considered his announcement a part of a new intrigue. The paper also denounced the Buonocore Administration as being unpopular. *La Voce* seemed happy at the prospect of the Mayor's resignation, saying that the Mayor was resigning outwardly for the above reason, but actually to extricate himself from the impossible situation in which the Administration now finds itself. The Mayor later announced that in view of the measure passed by the Constituent Assembly temporarily suspending the provision referred to above, he would not resign immediately but would ask the Directorate of his party what action he should take. The Mayor must make up his mind soon as to what he wants to do. He is now a deputy to the Constituent Assembly and apparently intends to run again for that position. He does not wish to give up his post as Mayor until

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<sup>741</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of December 15-31, 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 18.

absolutely necessary and in addition he hopes that he may be made Senator.

On December 29, a tumultuous session of the City Council took place during which some Rightist and Leftist members of the Council came to blows with the intervention of some of the spectators over the death of Victor Emanuele III. The Monarchist members of the Council had already left the hall silently thus expressing their sorrow over the death of the ex-King. At that point, one of the Councilors, Giovanni Masucci, a member of the Patrissi Party, tried to make a speech about the ex-King as a son of Naples which resulted in the most violent reaction from the Left with ensuing tumult. The Mayor, a Monarchist himself, finally found it necessary to adjourn the session after reprimanding Masucci.

The ceremonies for the arrival of the Friendship Boat were held in Naples on December 29 with the participation of the Honorable James C. Dunn, American Ambassador, Vice-Premier Pacciardi, Mr. Drew Pearson, the originator of the Friendship Train idea in the United States, the Prefect of the Province and the Mayor of Naples. The Friendship Boat was enthusiastically acclaimed by the populace and received extremely good press coverage with the exception of the Communist paper, *La Voce*.

It is interesting that Pearson and Dunn participated in the same ceremony considering that in 1938 the former had branded the latter a fascist appeaser in his "The Washington Merry-Go-Round" column. On December 29, Dunn gave a speech on the occasion highlighting the sincere idealism behind the American desire to aid the Italian people.

#### **January 1-15, 1948 Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>742</sup>**

The first meeting of the new year which lasted five hours was taken up mostly with the prospect of the Right against what was termed the infringement of freedom of speech in the previous meeting of the City Council, when Councilor Masucci was not allowed to finish his remarks on Victor Emanuel due to the violent reaction of the Left. The councilor felt so strongly about it that he resigned but his resignation was rejected by the Council. It is rumored that Vice-Mayor de Gennaro (Liberal) is

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<sup>742</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of January 1-15, 1948, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

considering resigning as result of his disagreement with the Mayor and Councilor Caracciolo over the administration of the aqueduct.

According to the Republican member of the Council, his position and that of the Saragat Socialist and Independent members is now very delicate as a result of the recent reshuffling of the De Gasperi Government. Apparently it is expected that they should now support the present City Administration; however, this is difficult as they were elected on the ticket of the Popular Bloc and as the Administration although supported by the Christian Democrats is made up mainly of Monarchists and Uomo Qualunquists. They have decided, therefore, to vote with the Bloc on all administrative matters but on no political question should one arise.

### **January 16-31, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>743</sup>**

On January 22, Ambassador Dunn participated in the welcoming ceremony in Bari for the arrival of the three-hundredth ships bringing material aid to Italy.

Arturo Labriola, Editor of the daily newspaper, *Roma*, resigned effective January 28, 1948. The reasons given for his resignation were pressing duties as a deputy, his desire to resume university and cultural work. The new editor is Pietro Visconti who was a literary critic of *Roma* during the Fascist period. Until recently, Visconti was a member of the Action Party. So far no change in editorial policy has been noted but it is believed in journalistic circles that Visconti will be less independent and possibly less liberal than Labriola.

### **February 1-15, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>744</sup>**

Mayor Buonocore and his administration resigned. Domenico Moscati, a Christian Democrat 57 or 58 years of age has been nominated to succeed Buonocore when his resignation is effective. [...] Moscati is a local lawyer of no particular prominence.

Reale's speech at the Mercadente Theater was probably one of the most violent denunciations of American foreign policy that has been made recently by any leading Communist in Italy. In reviewing the

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<sup>743</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of January 16-31, 1948, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

<sup>744</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of February 1-15, 1948, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

international situation, Reale identified “in the imperialism of the United States, which in the postwar period has passed from isolationism to an open program of world conquest, the coordinating and directing power of all the reaction forces of the world, of great financial capital, of monopolies, of great landed property, of great colonial and enslaving enterprises which are represented by those states and those governments who still rely on the fifth column forces of American imperialism in Europe.”

In the lead-up to the elections of April 18, 1948, an exchange of letters between the embassy and the consulate general in Naples documents the impact of political ideology on personal relationships. On February 18, Consul General Brandt wrote to inform Byington that Dr. Rosalbino Santoro, was considering an independent candidacy on the Fronte Democratico (Communist - Nenni Socialist block ticket) in the upcoming elections.<sup>745</sup> Santoro had left Saragat’s PSLI in July 1947 due to the “ambiguous position assumed by the Rome newspaper *L’Umanità* (PSLI) with respect to the resignation of the Leftist Corrado Alvaro from the editorship of *Risorgimento* and his replacement by Alberto Consiglio whom Dr. Santoro considers to be a Fascist.”<sup>746</sup>

Brandt “had suspected Santoro of being Leftist-minded” and was “disappointed that he has decided to join up with the Communists as he as always seemed to be Pro-American and he and his American wife have always been friendly with Americans, particularly us at the Consulate General.”<sup>747</sup> Santoro expressed his desire to meet with Ambassador Dunn to explain his candidacy. Brandt commented:

The Ambassador will have to decide whether he will see Dr. Santoro as he requests. In a private conversation with the Ambassador he might furnish information of value and he probably would be affronted should the Ambassador decline to see him. On the other hand his mind is evidently made up and it might be best for us to let him know that we

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<sup>745</sup> Memorandum of Conversation with Rosalbino Santoro by U.S. Consul in Naples William L. Blue, February 17, 1948. NARA, RG 84, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31. Santoro was in Cosenza in 1894 and earned a law degree from of the University of Naples in 1930.

<sup>746</sup> Ibid.

<sup>747</sup> Brandt to Byington, February 18, 1948, NARA, RG 84, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31. Brandt’s granddaughter confirmed that he “despised communism which he thought to be a cheat in addition to the brutal means used to implement the ideology.”

can have no friendly association with those whose ideas are in conflict with democracy as we see it.<sup>748</sup>

Byington responded to Brandt on the following day: “It was indeed a disappointment to learn [...] that Dr. Rosalbino Santoro has decided to become a fellow traveler with the communists in Italian politics.”<sup>749</sup> Ambassador Dunn did not see Santoro and thought it best “not to let him be under the impression that representatives of the American government in Italy desire a liaison of the type Santoro presumably proposes with the communists or pseudo-communists.”<sup>750</sup> Brandt saw Santoro on February 26 and urged him to reconsider his candidacy in light of the events in Czechoslovakia and whether the latter “really thought he could preserve his independence should the Communists gain the government in Italy.”<sup>751</sup> In the end, Santoro chose not to run in the election, and Brandt proposed to the embassy to “continue with him and his American wife socially as in the past in view of his changed mind.”<sup>752</sup>

#### **May 1-15, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>753</sup>**

Local reaction to the Parliamentary vote for the presidency followed along party lines. The Liberal Party newspaper *Il Giornale* and the pro-Saragat Socialist newspaper *Roma* as well as the Communist newspaper *La Voce*, deplored the alleged maneuver on the part of the Christian Democrats to elect Count Sforza as President, claiming that the Christian Democrats desired a more malleable individual for President in the person of Count Sforza, in opposition to the rigid jurist, De

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<sup>748</sup> Ibid.

<sup>749</sup> Byington to Brandt, February 19, 1948, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

<sup>750</sup> Ibid.

<sup>751</sup> Brandt to Byington, February 26, 1948, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

<sup>752</sup> Brandt to Byington, March 11, 1948, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

<sup>753</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of May 1-15, 1948, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

Nicola. [...] The final choice of Einaudi, however, was met with approval from all sides.

Brandt wrote to his daughter on May 14: "The elections, as you know by this time, went the right way although the communists gained a little in my part of Italy while losing in the North. The situation isn't as good as it should be considering that eight million Italians out of twenty-six million still voted Communist. So we must keep on our toes."<sup>754</sup>

### **September 16-30, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>755</sup>**

Italian law under the new constitution prevented members of Parliament from being directors of newspapers:

Nevertheless, newspapers throughout the country have evidently ignored this question until just a few days ago when the government made known its intentions to prosecute wherever the irregularity was found. The first newspaper to be affected was "Il Tempo" of Rome, according to an article published in the Naples newspaper "Il Giornale" of September 29, 1948 which stated that "Il Tempo" had its newspapers confiscated because its Responsible Director was a Senator. The same day that action was taken against "Il Tempo" the Monarchist Deputy, Alberto Consiglio, who up to that time had continued to sign as the Responsible Director of the local "Il Risorgimento," withdrew from that position. On the other hand the Naples Christian Democratic newspapers, "Il Domani d'Italia," continues to have as its Responsible Director the Senator Silvio Gava with apparent immunity.

### **December 1-15, Naples Consulate General Political Report - LaMont<sup>756</sup>**

One of the original Fascist leaders of Naples, Duca Andrea Carafa D'Andria, shot himself in a local hotel. At his funeral a number of what

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<sup>754</sup> Brandt to daughter, May 14, 1948.

<sup>755</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of September 16-30, 1948, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

<sup>756</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of December 1-15, 1948, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

the newspapers call those afflicted with “nostalgia” (longing for the defunct regime) raised their arms in the Fascist salute. The police gave a number of them, mostly young men, an opportunity to contemplate Fascism in the quiet of police headquarters.

#### **January 1-15, 1949 Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>757</sup>**

About two weeks ago the Monarchist members of the Municipal “Giunta” submitted their resignations. The monarchists are of a sufficient number such that without them a majority vote could be obtained on any issue only by a combination of Christian Democrats and the Communist-dominated Popular Bloc. Unless such a strange “arrangement” can be made, the Municipal administration cannot function and another election will have to be held to elect a new Municipal Council. The Monarchists gave as their official reasons for the move the inability of the present Council to seriously grasp and solve the economic problems of Naples. The other parties, including the Communists, vaguely accuse the Monarchists of obscure maneuvering to protect the interests of the Party’s financial backer and leading Southern Italian shipbuilder, Achille Lauro. Specifically what those interests are supposed to be no one has said.

The Prefect is of the opinion that Lauro is attempting to build a powerful Monarchist Party and that he (Lauro) and his strategists think that in an election at this time the Monarchists would win an overwhelming majority. The Prefect is bringing pressure to bear in an effort to avoid the dissolution of the present Municipal Council and the necessity of a Municipal election with its drain of state funds which could be used more profitably elsewhere than in political maneuvering.

#### **April 1-15, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>758</sup>**

For a traditionally Monarchist area, ex-King Umberto’s recent letter to the Monarchist Parliamentarians was received somewhat indifferently, according to local observers. Whereas at one time any widespread discussions concerning the Monarchy would at least have brought out displays of large pictures of the royal family in those

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<sup>757</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of January 1-15, 1949, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

<sup>758</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of April 1-15, 1949, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

sections of the city from which the Monarchists draw their strength, on this occasion there has been no outward demonstration indicating the least interest. [...]

There is no reason to believe, however, that the local Monarchists have ceased trying to take over the administration. They continue to do everything in their power to embarrass the Christian Democrat-Liberal coalition which operates on a narrow margin.

Consul General Brandt wrote to his daughter on April 29: "The Department has transferred eight of my officers comprising one half of my officer staff and including both senior subordinate officers. It will be months before all the replacements have arrived and they will be new to life and work in Naples which means I am going to have a terrible job to keep the work going in the meantime."<sup>759</sup>

#### **June 16-August 1, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>760</sup>**

Following the unsuccessful attempt last January to capture the Municipal Administration, the National Monarchist Party has been having serious internal difficulties. Attributed almost entirely to the personal ambitions of the leaders and the political ineptitude of the Party's financial backer, Achille Lauro, the Monarchist Party during this period has split into three and possibly four different groups. Reported attempts to bring the groups back together again are said to have miserably failed, resulting in widening the differences. The details of those differences and the behind-the-scenes machinations are not known, but the frantic attacks against the splinter groups made by the official Monarchist organ "Il Risorgimento" proves the gravity of the dissension. Whatever the final outcome, it is general agreed that the Monarchists will have lost a great deal of prestige and may very well never again be a serious political force.

One of the first results, according to information reaching this office, is the recent decline in circulation of Lauro's newspaper "Il Risorgimento", formerly the most widely read newspaper in this area. It is rumored that "Il Risorgimento" which had been one of the very few

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<sup>759</sup> Brandt to Daughter, April 29, 1949.

<sup>760</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of June 16 to August 1, 1949, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

local newspapers showing a profit, is now losing money. Whether or not this is true it is known that Lauro has been approached on the possibility of selling half of his fifty percent interest in the “Società Editrice Meridionale” (S.E.M) which controls three of the leading local newspapers, “Il Risorgimento”, “Roma”, and “Corriere di Napoli”. Lauro has not definitely turned back the offer and negotiations are now in progress.

The split in the Monarchist leadership, following as it does the attempt to take over the Municipal administration just prior to the Sardinian elections, coupled with ex-King Umberto’s letter to the Monarchist leaders which caused anti-Monarchist elements to accuse the ex-King of openly interfering in Italian political affairs has laid the groundwork for a rumor that the Government ordered Achille Lauro to break up the Monarchist Party. It is said that the Government feels these unexpected and unwarranted moves by the Monarchists and ex-King have done nothing more than embarrass it and give aid and comfort to the Communists. Therefore, the Monarchists and the idea of Naples being the Monarchists’ stronghold, had to be done away with.

Carriers of this rumor, when asked why they thought Lauro would submit to such an order, pointed out that Lauro’s principal business is operating ships and not politics. The government, they add, has enormous influence on the success or failure of individual ship operators and the Minister of Merchant Marine, Giuseppe Saragat, can hardly be considered sympathetic to the Monarchist cause.

A confidential biographical data report was produced on Lauro on August 5, 1948.<sup>761</sup> On July 26, 1949, the prefect G. Paternò wrote to the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security:

On the 24 and 25 the National Council of the National Monarchist Party reunited in Naples. 180 people were present, among them were the General Secretary of the Party Hon. Covelli, the honorable Alliata, Consiglio, Marchesano, Fiorentina and Era as well as the Ambassadors Guariglia and Rocco [...] At the end of the meetings, the National Council sent a telegram greeting to the ex-King Umberto and a message

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<sup>761</sup> This biographical report was not found in research at NARA College Park.

to the shipbuilder Achille Lauro, defined ‘tenacious asserter of the new monarchist fortunes of the fatherland’.<sup>762</sup>

Paternò reported on August 30, 1948:

On the morning of August 28, the Ambassador Guido Rocco presided over an extraordinary assembly of the local section of the National Monarchist Party in a cinema on the island of Capri. The former Ambassador Roberto Cantalupo illustrated the action situation of Italy from an internal and international point of view. At the conclusion of the assembly, by unanimous vote, a telegram wishing for the return of the monarchical institution in Italy was sent to ex-King Umberto.<sup>763</sup>

In a separate transmission also dated August 30 Paternò noted that the new Independent Monarchist Association, founded by dissidents of the National Monarchist Party, boasted 10,000 registered members in the Naples province.<sup>764</sup> (See: Appendix G for original document in Italian) The president of the new formation was the municipal assessor Duke Paolo Marulli d’Ascoli Troiano who had been the president of the Naples Lawn Tennis Club from 1933 to 1937.<sup>765</sup> Gustavo Verde who had been identified in an OSS report on June 5, 1944 as close to Prince Umberto was an organizer.<sup>766</sup>

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<sup>762</sup> Paternò to Interior Ministry, July 26, 1949, ACS, Ministero Dell’Interno - Gabinetto Partiti - 1944-1947 partiti monarchici Busta 175 Fascicolo 422P. Si segnala, per opportuna notizia, che nei giorni 24 e 25 è riunito il Napoli il Consiglio Nazionale del Partito Nazionale Monarchico. Erano presenti circa 180 persone, fra le quali il Segretario Generale del Partito On. Covelli, gli Onorevoli Alliata, Consiglio, Marchesano, Fiorentino ed Era e gli Ambasciatori Guariglia e Rocco. [...] A conclusione dei propri lavori, il Consiglio Nazionale del Partito ha inviato un telegramma di saluto all’ex Re Umberto e un messaggio all’armatore Achille Lauro, definito “tenace assertore delle nuove fortune monarchiche della Patria.”

<sup>763</sup> Paternò to Interior Ministry, August 30, 1949, ACS, Ministero Dell’Interno - Gabinetto Partiti - 1944-1947 partiti monarchici Busta 175 Fascicolo 422P Si segnala, per notizia, che nella mattina del 28 corrente, presieduta dall’Ambasciatore Guido Rocco, ha avuto luogo, in un cinema di Capri, un’assemblea straordinaria alla locale Sezione del Partito Nazionale Monarchico. Ha parlato agli intervenuti l’ex Ambasciatore Roberto Cantalupo illustrando, fra l’altro, l’attuale situazione dell’Italia dal punto di vista interna ed internazionale. A conclusione dell’assemblea, per decisione unanime dei presenti è stato inviato all’ex Re Umberto un telegramma auspicante il ritorno della istituzione monarchia in Italia.

<sup>764</sup> Paternò to Interior Ministry, August 30, 1949, Ministero Dell’Interno, Gabinetto 1947, Busta 35 - Fascicolo 2056 “Napoli. Situazione politica ed economica della provincia”.

<sup>765</sup> His father Sebastiano was the first president of the Tennis Club from 1905 to 1915, while his brother Carlo, Duca di San Cesario occupied the same position from 1928 to 1932.

<sup>766</sup> OSS Report, June 5, 1944, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 106.

## August 16-August 31, Naples Consulate General Political Report - Brandt<sup>767</sup>

Following the split in the Monarchist Party, the Monarchist Deputy, Alberto Consiglio, was removed as director of the leading Southern Italian newspaper *Il Risorgimento*. His place was taken by the moderate Socialist, Raffaele Cafiero, who had been director of the pro-Saragat Socialist newspaper *Roma*. Although both the *Roma* and *Il Risorgimento* continued to be under the ownership of the Neapolitan shipbuilder Achille Lauro, Naples now has two of its leading newspapers favorable to the moderate left. Gossipers cannot resist pointing out that “coincidence” that a shipbuilder and operator should so favor the right wing Socialists when the leader of those Socialists is Minister of Merchant Marine.

Consul General Brandt retired in November 1949. Upon leaving he summarized his five-plus years in Naples: “the force of communism in Italy has tremendously decreased.”<sup>768</sup> For the consulate general’s inspection report on October 14, Brandt observed

The Embassy has placed particular emphasis on the development of the free labor movement, and the internal politics of the communist-dominated one. Embassy interest has also been expressed in the internal politics of the Christian Democrat Party; relationship between the various Socialist parties, public opinion regarding Italy’s participation in the Atlantic Pact etc. [...] Of special interest; of course is the spread of Communism in this area. It should be mentioned that in the elections of 1948, in all of Italy the Province of Naples gave the Communists the greatest electoral gain over the 1946 results.<sup>769</sup>

Therefore, the embassy did not emphasize reporting on municipal affairs and monarchist or neofascist activity. In a way this demonstrates that the embassy did not want to be involved in the daily administration of Italian affairs, as had been the case until AMG. Still, Minister Counselor Byington would have been able to keep abreast of political developments from the

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<sup>767</sup> Naples Consulate General Political Report for the period of August 16-31, 1948, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 31.

<sup>768</sup> “Ship Delayed 3 Hours While Officials Talk”, *New York Times*, December 24, 1949, p. 10.

<sup>769</sup> NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 81, Naples Consulate General, 1949.

local nobility such as Prince Caracciolo who often traveled to Rome. Furthermore, it is likely that he received updates from Consul Harold M. Granata who was again working in Naples and had evidently become overly familiar with the city: on October 14, 1949, Foreign Service inspector Laurence C. Frank recommended that “Vice-Consul Harold M. Granata be transferred within the next few months to another active immigration office, preferably outside of Italy, possibly to Spain. Granata has had 14 years Foreign Service experience, approximately 11 of which have been served at Naples. His transfer would be in his own as well as the Service’s interest.”<sup>770</sup>

As a result, in the period from 1947 to 1949 there are scarce updates in the consular reporting on the political activities of monarchist or *qualunquist* groups despite their control of the City Council’s majority and Mayor Buonocore’s monarchist leanings.<sup>771</sup> Brandt did note in April 1949 that the monarchists were attempting to regain control of the city council but did not delve into their methods of operation. There is not a single report on the motivations of Buonocore, only objective descriptions of City Council activities and the influential Councilman Prince Caracciolo is mentioned one time in three years.

For the entire two and a half year period from March 1947 to August 1949 there is scant acknowledgment in the consular reporting of revanchist monarchist activities in the Naples area, almost as if these activities did not exist. In fact, the reports by the Prefect of the Naples Province are more attentive to monarchist activities. As we have seen, elements of the Neapolitan aristocracy traveled to Rome for social and political activities where they entered into contact with the Embassy’s Foreign Service officers. Guido Rocco, the former Italian Ambassador to Turkey, who presided over Naples meetings of the National Monarchist Party in 1949 was a source of information to the Embassy at the same time. It is evident that there was an understanding with the consulate general that the embassy managed these developments. Ambassador Dunn was certainly aware of monarchist activities in Naples as he wrote to Secretary of State Marshall on November 4, 1947: “*Messaggero* and *Avanti* reported on October 31 that proceedings are underway in Naples against Francesco Moscato, Luigi

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<sup>770</sup> Ibid. Granata had previously served in Naples from 1937 to 1941.

<sup>771</sup> Buonocore’s term as Mayor of Naples concluded on February 28, 1948.

Pappalardo, Armando Prodamo, and Romano Visiotti accused of belonging to an insurrectional monarchist organization and that greatest reserve being maintained on subject.”<sup>772</sup> Therefore, despite no information of this kind leaving the Naples Consulate General in political reports, the arrest of four men in Naples for belonging to an insurrectional monarchist organization was worthy of reporting to Marshall.

### **3.6 The State Department and the Red Scare**

In late November 1945, Patrick Hurley, the U.S. Ambassador to China, resigned in protest over the actions of career diplomats under his command who he claimed were undermining the Truman administration’s policy of support for the government of Chiang Kai-shek. In particular, Hurley accused John S. Service an expert on China who had been critical of Kai-shek in his political reports. Service had been arrested in June 1945 for having allegedly passing classified information to the *Amerasia* magazine and was absolved of wrongdoing.

In an adverse political climate, Secretary of State Byrnes sided with the fundamental democratic principle of a regular trial for the accused and reinstated Service. The “China hands” episode, however, led to strong recriminations in Congress between Democrats and Republicans and broke the wartime subordination of party interests in favor of cooperation on foreign policy. The Republican attacks on the Truman administration for being soft on communism were viewed by many Democrats as political opportunism at the expense of public servants.

The liberal-democratic American society was vulnerable to the human intelligence capabilities of the KGB. Differently, American spies sent to the Soviet Union soon disappeared as their identity had been compromised by Soviet agents operating in the United States. Consequently, in 1946, the FBI began an investigation to uncover a high-ranking Soviet spy in the State Department which eventually led to the trial of Alger Hiss, who had

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<sup>772</sup> Dunn to Marshall, November 4, 1947, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 202.

been an assistant of Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson during World War II.<sup>773</sup> To counter the widespread perception of a weak administration, President Truman signed Executive Order 9835 on March 21, 1947, which provided for the creation of loyalty tests for federal employees as a means of eliminating possible communist influence in the federal government. On June 9, the Loyalty Security Board of the State Department was set up by the Secretary of State Marshall.<sup>774</sup> Over the next five years the board, headed by Conrad Snow, a Republican lawyer from New Hampshire, examined 684 loyalty cases and 61 security cases. All but 18 of those investigated were cleared.<sup>775</sup>

As time passed the fear of internal subterfuge was magnified by events overseas. The Truman administration's long-term response to the successful Soviet nuclear test of August 1949, and the loss of China to communism was to triple the United States' military budget. George Kennan was replaced as Policy Planning Staff Director by his colleague Paul Nitze who was largely responsible for producing NSC 68 of April 14, 1950. The document marked a key transition in American foreign policy as noted by the historian Robert Pollard: "Although some elements of the military-industrial complex were already in place by the late 1940s, economic power remained the mainstay of U.S. security until the eve of the Korean War."<sup>776</sup> Secretary of State Acheson noted in a private conversation in March 1950 that "the American people have a false sense of security and do not realize that the world situation, which is called a cold war, is in fact a real war [...] During the last six to nine months there had been a trend against us which, if allowed to continue, would lead to a considerable deterioration of

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<sup>773</sup> In January 1950, Hiss was found guilty on two counts of perjury, in part due to the persistence of the Republican Congressman Richard Nixon who headed a special subcommittee dedicated to the case.

<sup>774</sup> Shortly thereafter, the Hollywood film industry was investigated for communist activity by the House of Representatives Committee on Un-American Activities. On November 26, 1947, ten writers and directors who refused to incriminate themselves regarding membership in the American Communist Party were subsequently blacklisted. The House of Representatives voted 346 to 17 to hold them in contempt of Congress.

<sup>775</sup> See Appendix A in Oral History Interview with Conrad E. Snow, interviewed by Richard D. McKinzie, July 2, 1973.

<sup>776</sup> R. Pollard, "The National Security State Reconsidered: Truman and Economic Containment", in *The Truman Presidency*, ed. M. Lacey, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 207.

our position.”<sup>777</sup> Kennan saw matters differently and took leave from the State Department in June 1950. In his 1951 treatise, *American Diplomacy, 1900-1950*, he wrote: “In 1900 we exaggerated the security of our position and had an overweening confidence in our strength and our ability to solve problems, whereas today we exaggerate our dangers and have a tendency to rate our own abilities less than they actually are.”<sup>778</sup> For this reason Kennan opposed the increasing militarization of the Truman administration’s foreign policy as sanctified by NSC 68, especially regarding the ever-increasing stockpile of nuclear weapons.

Fear over national security continued to have strong domestic political ramifications. Sensing an opportunity to leap to prominence in the tense political climate, the Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin claimed to have a list with the name of 57 State Department employees who were communists in a speech in Wheeling, West Virginia on February 9, 1950. In an attempt to expose communists, McCarthy began a systematic recourse to accusations against public figures for presumed membership in the American communist party or of sympathy with said party. He was assisted in his activities by J. Edgar Hoover’s complicit FBI; it is generally accepted that the list of State Department employees favorable to communism came from the secret FBI files in the office of Hoover’s former fiscal aide, Robert E. Lee, the release of which constituted a betrayal of the executive branch headed by Truman.

One of McCarthy’s victims was the previously mentioned Foreign Service officer John Service whom the senator cited an example of a State Department conspiracy that led to the “sell out” of the American position in China. Shortly thereafter, Service was indeed found ineligible for employment based on loyalty grounds by the Loyalty Review Board.<sup>779</sup> The effects of the Service episode on morale in the Foreign Service were long felt; many diplomats felt that there was no one to protect the State Department from legislative abuse. The majority of career Foreign Service officers were disgusted by McCarthy’s campaign and never believed

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<sup>777</sup> J.L. Harper, *American Visions of Europe*, p. 291.

<sup>778</sup> G.F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy*, 60th Anniversary Edition, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2012, p. 3.

<sup>779</sup> The Loyalty Review Board supervised the activity of the Loyalty Security Board.

that there was a serious threat of communist infiltration of the State Department.<sup>780</sup> An exception was the retired former Ambassador Arthur Bliss Lane who campaigned for McCarthy's reelection in 1952. As a result of Senator McCarthy's crusade, the Foreign Service did not hire new recruits for a full two years. The Rome embassy was also impacted by the Red Scare. As noted in the inspection report from November 1949: "Regarding the Loyalty Investigation of Miss Joyce W. Lorimer, the case is presently in the hands of the Department's Loyalty Board and SY is unable to estimate when the Board will consider this case in view of the McCarthy investigations."<sup>781</sup>

It was not only Republicans who led the fight against domestic communism. The Democratic Senator from Nevada Pat McCarran fought for the bill that eventually bore his name; on September 22, 1950, Congress passed the McCarran Internal Security Act which established a Subversive Activities Control Board and enabled the president to imprison "each person as to whom there is a reasonable ground to believe that such person probably will engage in, or probably will conspire with others to engage in, acts of espionage or sabotage." Truman's veto of the law was immediately overridden by the Congress.

### **The Lavender Scare**

On December 15, 1950, an investigation by a Senate subcommittee on the Expenditures in the Executive Departments singled out the State Department for "mishandling" 91 homosexual cases by allowing many of the employees to resign "for personal reasons" and failing to bar them from other federal jobs. The subcommittee concluded that "The lack of emotional stability which is found in most sex perverts, and the weakness of their moral fiber, make them susceptible to the blandishments of foreign espionage agents."<sup>782</sup> Senator

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<sup>780</sup> Homer M. Byington III in personal correspondence affirmed that his father was "disgusted by McCarthy."

<sup>781</sup> Laurence C. Frank Foreign Service Inspector, letter June 22, 1950 as a result of November 1949 Inspection Report in NARA, RG 59 Inspection Reports on Foreign Service Posts, Box 99, Rome Embassy, November 1949.

<sup>782</sup> "Employment of Homosexuals and other Sex Perverts in Government" 81st Congress 2d Session Document No. 241 of December 15, 1950.

McCarthy claimed that communists overseas had convinced undeclared homosexuals working in the State Department to reveal government secrets in exchange for keeping their sexual identity secret. In 1953, McCarthy's assistants Roy Cohn and David Schine traveled throughout Europe to investigate purported communist and homosexual activity in American embassies.<sup>783</sup> Upon Cohn and Schine's arrival in Rome in April they were taken to Chargé d'Affaires Elbridge Durbrow's home where they had a long meeting with various representatives of the American agencies operating in Italy.<sup>784</sup>

Homosexuals were largely undeclared in the pre-World War II Foreign Service. "Often derided as 'overcivilized', weak, and effeminate, Foreign Service officers earned occasional epithets such as 'pussy-foot,' and 'stuffed shirt'. Junior officers - often single men without families - were particularly suspect because they often lived abroad, because of their open-mindedness toward foreigners and 'alien' forms of government."<sup>785</sup> Men who exhibited effeminate behavior were labeled as eccentric. As remembered by Jane Byington: "It seems to me we had more eccentrics and, until we got up to the McCarthy period, nobody particularly thought of this being eccentric, you know."<sup>786</sup>

Franklin Roosevelt certainly had no reservations about sexual orientation with the men he employed in his administration. William Bullitt, the first U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1933 was bisexual and used his favored position with Roosevelt to have his private secretary, the homosexual Carmel Offie, appointed as a career Foreign Service officer.<sup>787</sup> In later years, Bullitt developed a particularly nasty rivalry with Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles. In fact, Bullitt conspired with Secretary of State Hull in an attempt to force President Roosevelt to fire Welles for the latter's "criminal homosexuality".<sup>788</sup> Specifically, Bullitt

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<sup>783</sup> Ironically, Cohn was also later accused of homosexuality.

<sup>784</sup> "Tour Approaching End", *New York Times*, April 19, 1953, p. 27.

<sup>785</sup> R.W. Baxter, "Homo-Hunting' in the Early Cold War: Senator Kenneth Wherry and the Homophobic Side of McCarthyism", *Nebraska History* 84 (2003): p. 121.

<sup>786</sup> ADST interview, Jane Byington with Margaret Sullivan, March 8, 1989.

<sup>787</sup> In *The Sum of Perishable Things*, Bullitt is described as bisexual.

<sup>788</sup> NY Times book review: Spheres of Influence <https://www.nytimes.com/books/98/01/25/reviews/980125.25smith.html>, January 25, 1998.

ordered Offie to “distribute documents all over Capitol Hill describing Sumner Welles’ homosexual exploits.”<sup>789</sup> Welles was forced to resign in 1943. Offie was arrested in 1943 for attempting to solicit a police officer in Lafayette Park across from the White House. He was given a cover story and defended by Hull and the latter’s principal advisor James Dunn. Offie was expelled from the CIA in 1950 due to pressure from Senator McCarthy regarding the Lafayette Park incident.<sup>790</sup>

Samuel Reber, a career Foreign Service officer who had served in Rome in the 1930s with Alexander Kirk and William Phillips, was forced to quietly resign in 1953 due to McCarthy’s threat to expose a homosexual incident from his past.<sup>791</sup> A letter dated June 8, 1939, from Phillips to the bisexual Lithuanian-American art historian, Bernard Berenson then living at the Villa I Tatti in Florence demonstrated the ambassador’s proclivity to male company: “As for my plans, Sam Reber and I are leaving on Saturday for a ten days’ trip to Budapest and Belgrade, and return via Ragusa and Venice. I had hoped that I might catch a glimpse of Prince Paul in Belgrade, if only to pay my respects to him, but our Minister advises me that he has already left Belgrade for the summer.”<sup>792</sup> In the postwar period Reber had served as Deputy Vice-President of the Allied Commission in Rome where he worked with Offie and Kirk who was widely acknowledged as a homosexual and had entered the Foreign Service as Phillips’ private secretary in 1915. Reber was a friend of James Dunn and participated in the matrimony of Dunn’s daughter.<sup>793</sup> In conclusion, as noted by Graham Stuart: “In the period from January 1, 1947, to January 1, 1951, of 28000 employees, 158 people were expelled from the State Department, of which 14 were for security reasons and 144 for

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<sup>789</sup> D. Fromkin, *In the Time of the Americans: FDR, Truman, Eisenhower, Marshall, MacArthur: The Generation that Changed America’s Role in the World*, New York, Doubleday, 2013, p. 596.

<sup>790</sup> Ibid. p. 662.

<sup>791</sup> See: R.D. Dean *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy*, Amherst, MA, University of Massachusetts Press, 2001, p.140.

<sup>792</sup> Phillips to Berenson, June 8, 1939.

<sup>793</sup> Dunn’s son-in-law, Charles Thayer, was also forced to leave the Foreign Service for homosexuality.

homosexuality.”<sup>794</sup> Ironically, at the same time as the Foreign Service was becoming increasingly accessible to a wider cross-section of American society, homosexuals who had been previously accepted as diplomats, were excluded as a result of tensions stemming from the Cold War.

### **3.7 Homer M. Byington Jr. - Director of Western European Affairs, 1950-1953**

From June 1950 to November 1953 Homer M. Byington Jr. was the Director of the Western European affairs of the State Department. This was the most highly sought after domestic post for upper level diplomats on assignment in the department who were not yet ripe for an ambassadorship. Unlike his former superior James Dunn, Byington displayed little interest in the bureaucratic machinations necessary to obtain influence in Washington. While his new role was considered a policy-making position there were two intermediate levels between him and Secretary of State Dean Acheson. Therefore, Byington mostly executed instead of creating policy. An example was his encouragement of Italian participation in the proposed integrated defense force known as the European Defense Community (CED) even though he personally did not believe in the project due to his knowledge of the historical enmity between the various Western European states.<sup>795</sup>

On the urgent question of Trieste, Byington was identified as a “friend” of Italy by the Italian Ambassador in Washington, Alberto Tarchiani.<sup>796</sup> When thinking of the national interest, Byington did not believe that the ethnically fractured Yugoslavia could be of much assistance to the United States.<sup>797</sup> In 1951, he was favorable to direct dialogue between

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<sup>794</sup> G.H. Stuart, *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*, New York, Appleton-Century Crofts, Second Edition, 1952, p. 59.

<sup>795</sup> See: Thompson to the Secretary of State, August 14, 1951, in FRUS 951. European security and the German question Volume I, p. 855.

<sup>796</sup> Ibid. p. 443.

<sup>797</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 60. Byington’s role in the Trieste settlement is recorded in the memoirs of Italian diplomats Egidio Ortona and Alberto Tarchiani. See: E. Ortona, *Anni D’America: La Diplomazia 1953-1961*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1986, A. Tarchiani, *Dieci Anni tra Roma e Washington*, Milan, Mondadori, 1955, D. De Castro, *La questione di Trieste: L’azione politica e diplomatica italiana dal 1943 al 1954 Volume Secondo La fase dinamica*, Trieste, Lint, 1981.

Yugoslavia and Italy to resolve the dispute. The two countries, however, were unable to arrive at a mutually agreeable compromise on the future of Trieste and management of the negotiations was taken over by the Anglo-Americans who still had armed forces protecting the Free Territory of Trieste. Byington returned to Rome in both March and April 1953, on the latter occasion meeting with Prime Minister De Gasperi, but did not have permission from Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to negotiate on behalf of the United States.<sup>798</sup> Still, De Gasperi had communicated indirectly to Washington that he would “love to see Byington”: an indication of trust and confidence in the diplomat he had come to know from 1947 to 1950.<sup>799</sup>

In late October 1953, Byington flew to London where he continued to prepare the ground for an eventual settlement; the “Byington plan” as it came to be known in the State Department involved an ethnic solution for the Italians living in the Yugoslav Zone B, but not for the Yugoslavs in the Italian Zone A.<sup>800</sup> To rectify this imbalance, he proposed that the Yugoslavs could lease railroad and port facilities in Trieste, which would return to Italy. The U.S. Ambassador in Belgrade, James Riddleberger considered the plan overly favorable to the Italian side and cautioned that, if presented as a starting point of negotiations, it might scuttle the three power conference between the Americans, British, and Yugoslavs slated for February 1954. In the end, Byington’s proposal demonstrated his desire to aid the Christian Democrats who had suffered domestic political consequences over the unresolved fate of Trieste in the 1953 elections. Prior to his transfer to Madrid he performed much of the groundwork which led to the eventual Trieste agreement, but the final negotiations were carried out in London by Llewellyn Thompson who was then serving as the U.S. Ambassador to Austria.<sup>801</sup>

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<sup>798</sup> See: D. De Castro, *La questione di Trieste: L'azione politica e diplomatica italiana dal 1943 al 1954 Volume Secondo La fase dinamica*, Trieste, Lint, 1981, pp. 443-445.

<sup>799</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 415.

<sup>800</sup> For details of plan see Riddleberger to State Department, January 27, 1954, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Eastern Europe; Soviet Union, Eastern Mediterranean, Volume VIII*

<sup>801</sup> Interestingly, it was Thompson who had previously replaced Byington as Minister Counselor in Rome in 1950. Clare Boothe Luce later sought the credit for resolving the thorny question of Trieste through her personal relationship with President Eisenhower while it was generally accepted in the Foreign Service community that Thompson was responsible for getting Marshal Tito’s final approval.

With regard to Italian domestic politics, Byington observed in March 1951 that “the Communist parties in Europe had lost one-third of their membership since World War II.”<sup>802</sup> Still, in light of communist gains in local elections of May and June 1951, it became evident that De Gasperi’s centrist governing majority of Christian Democrats and Republicans would not be a long-term solution. On January 15, 1952, the embassy reported to Washington that Christian Democratic elements, led by De Gasperi’s Under Secretary Giulio Andreotti, were attempting to link with the National Monarchist Party ahead of the upcoming local elections in Naples and Palermo; Andreotti’s group also postulated an alliance with some nationalist elements dissenting from the MSI in order to break the alliance between that party and the PNM thus allowing the Christian Democrats to replace the neofascists.<sup>803</sup> At the time, the nationalist elements in the MSI who accepted NATO were led by Prince Junio Valerio Borghese, who had been in contact with the embassy since his release from prison in February 1949.

The following week, on January 21, Ambassador Dunn reported that the political scene presented “superficially at least, aspect of confused and frustrated drifting which is all the more discouraging since local elections in south are only three months off and natl elections little more than a year away. Situation has elements of real danger and political stability in Italy, depending as it does on work of one man—De Gasperi can no longer be taken for granted in our calculations.”<sup>804</sup> On a similar note, Byington summarized his conversation with Ambassador Tarchiani in Washington D.C. on February 12 in which it was noted that the Communist Party with its unlimited funds from the Soviet Union was becoming more ambitious in the South:

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<sup>802</sup> “Communist Party Loses Third of Members “in Western Europe”, *Washington Post*, March 8, 1951, p. 1.

<sup>803</sup> Thompson to State Department, January 15, 1952, NARA RG 84, Classified general records Rome embassy 1950-1952, Box 75.

<sup>804</sup> Dunn to Department of State, January 21, 1952 in Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western Europe and Canada, Volume VI, Part 2, Document no. 722, p. 1565. RG 59, 765.00/1-2152: Telegram

Prime Minister De Gasperi's government at the same time faces increasing opposition on the part of the land owners who oppose its policy of agrarian reform and on the part of the industrialists who do not approve of the fiscal reform and of its consequent increase in taxes. These two programs which are politically necessary in Italy have the effect of alienating financial support which is also desperately needed by the government.<sup>805</sup>

Therefore, by 1952 Byington's consideration of agricultural reform had evolved from that of a demagogic appeal by the left in 1948 to a "politically necessary" anticommunist measure in Southern Italy.<sup>806</sup> As a solution to the narrowing Christian Democrat consensus, he hoped to widen the government majority by including monarchist elements. On the other hand, Ellsworth Bunker, the new ambassador in Rome, indicated a less favorable interpretation of monarchist support on the eve of local elections in Southern Italy on May 20:

Excluding Rome, only one-third of Ital population, practically all in south, is voting. Southern neo-Fascism and Monarchism is largely special, "local" phenomenon caused by fact south never experienced severer aspects Ger occupation or [garble] republic, saw Amer Army as invader, had closer ties with African Colonies and received refugees and suffered econ damage when Colonies lost, had Monarchist tradition, and have social structure which discourages moderate or "progressive" polit thought.<sup>807</sup>

The National Monarchist Party defeated the Christian Democrats in the local elections in Naples on May 25. Soon thereafter rumor spread that De Gasperi might form a new government with monarchist support. On July 9, the shipping and newspaper magnate Achille Lauro of the PNM became Mayor of Naples with support of the MSI in the City Council. As

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<sup>805</sup> Byington Memorandum of Conversation with Tarchiani, February 12, 1952 in Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western Europe and Canada, Volume VI, Part 2, Document no. 724, p. 1572, Secretary's Memoranda, lot 53 D 544, "February 1952"

<sup>806</sup> By September 1950, 30,000 hectares had been redistributed to peasants in the Sila region of Calabria. See Rome ECA to Secretary of State, September 1, 1950, NARA, RG 84, Classified General Records 1946-52, Box 47.

<sup>807</sup> Bunker to Department of State, May 20, 1952, in Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western Europe and Canada, Volume VI, Part 2, Document no. 725, p.1573, RG 59 765.00/5-2052: Telegram.

noted by the historian Federico Robbe, Ambassador Bunker reported on May 28 that ex-King Umberto II might play a decisive role in breaking the alliance between the PNM and MSI in order to facilitate an agreement between the monarchists and Christian Democrats.<sup>808</sup> Umberto II lived in exile in Estoril, Portugal in the early 1950s. At this time the U.S. Ambassador to Portugal was Lincoln MacVeagh who, in 1955, married Virginia Ferrante di Ruffano of the Neapolitan nobility whose brother, Marchese Antonio Ferrante di Ruffano, had been decorated for military valor by King Umberto II. In short, it seems highly likely that Byington would have been indirectly in contact with the former king in this period.

On June 12, Byington summarized another conversation with Ambassador Tarchiani:

He, himself, (Tarchiani) was of the opinion that Prime Minister De Gasperi would not follow the advice of some of his followers that he try to form a coalition to the right with the Monarchists. [...] It was in any event obvious that the Christian Democrats could not align themselves with the MSI and have any moral ground on which to continue their fight against Communism.<sup>809</sup>

On July 2, Bunker cabled that De Gasperi's observation "that there was one important difference between the MSI (neo Fascists) and the Communists, i.e., that the former, who appealed largely to the youth of the country, wld unquestionably fight on our side if war came, whereas this was not true of the Communists."<sup>810</sup> Prince Borghese presided over the MSI's national congress in late July in L'Aquila and rumors spread that Ambassador Bunker was favorable to the MSI's inclusion in the government majority.<sup>811</sup> While Bunker attempted to debunk his supposed favorability to the MSI, which might have been residual from Dunn's

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<sup>808</sup> Bunker to Secretary of State, May 28, 1952, NARA RG 84, Box 74, Folder 350, - Italy elections (confidential) 1950-1952 cited in F. Robbe, *L'Impossibile incontro: Gli Stati Uniti e la destra italiana negli anni Cinquanta*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 2012, p. 68.

<sup>809</sup> Byington Memorandum of Conversation with Tarchiani, June 12, 1952 in Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western Europe and Canada, Volume VI, Part 2, Document no. 727, p. 1578, RG 59 765.00/6-1252.

<sup>810</sup> Bunker to Department of State, July 2, 1952, in Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western Europe and Canada, Volume VI, Part 2, Document no. 728, p. 1580, RG 59 711.551/7-2552.

<sup>811</sup> See F. Robbe, *L'Impossibile incontro: Gli Stati Uniti e la destra italiana negli anni Cinquanta*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 2012, p. 68.

tenure, it seems likely, especially given later developments in 1970, that Byington was favorably disposed toward Borghese's dissident elements.

On September 5, Bunker summarized a conversation with De Gasperi at Sella Valsugano in a memorandum that was sent as an enclosure to a letter to Byington:

The Prime Minister said that he had overtures from the Monarchists who wanted to join with the CD, but that he had rejected these. He had told them that while a monarchy could be democratic, it was now unconstitutional in Italy, and that a plebiscite would be unthinkable in the present state of Italian and world affairs. However, he did not rule out the possibility of support from individual monarchists. He said that Prince Alliata and others of the Sicilian branch of the party were coming to see him to talk about an alliance. He proposed to tell them that would be impossible in the name of the monarchist party, but that they could support him and the coalition as individuals.<sup>812</sup>

Bunker's indication to Byington that De Gasperi considered unthinkable a second plebiscite on the institutional question indicates that the Director of WE sought to pressure the Italian Government in the direction of holding a second referendum in line with the political platform of the National Monarchist Party. Bunker's memorandum, sent in a personal letter instead of telegram is another indication of Byington's connection to the monarchists. Moreover, Prince Alliata, who had founded the Front of Monarchist Unity after leaving the PNM in June 1951 served in the Chamber of Deputies from 1948 to 1963 and was identified in 1981 as a member of the Propaganda Due Masonic Lodge which was responsible for right-wing terrorist bombings. He had close ties to Neapolitan monarchist politicians such as Alfredo Covelli and Byington's long-time friend Prince Caracciolo. Alliata is alleged to have been involved in planning the aborted Borghese *coup d'état* of 1970 but fled to Malta to avoid prosecution.<sup>813</sup>

Similar to De Gasperi's domestic difficulties, President Truman's approval rating tumbled to the low 20s in 1952 as the American public was frustrated by the stalemate in Korea. On March 11, due to a massive and unsolicited grassroots popular movement, Dwight D.

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<sup>812</sup> Bunker to Byington, September 5, 1952, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western Europe and Canada, Volume VI, Part 2, Document no. 732, p. 1592, RG 59 765.00/9-1852.*

<sup>813</sup> See: A. Ziniti, "La vita di un bohemien con la nostalgia della corona", *La Repubblica*, May 12, 1994.

Eisenhower won the New Hampshire Republican primary against the isolationist senator from Ohio Robert A. Taft. Eisenhower had not campaigned as he was in Paris as Supreme Allied Commander. At the end of March, Truman stated that he would not run for re-election. On June 2, Eisenhower retired from the military; two days later he gave his first political speech in his hometown of Abilene, Kansas.

As an internationalist Republican, Byington supported Eisenhower over Taft. The last nine months of his assignment as Director of Western European Affairs coincided with the beginning of the Eisenhower administration. A realist, he favored a more assertive application of containment of Soviet expansionism outlined by the Truman Doctrine. He perceived communism as an economic problem and was close to fellow Republican Nelson Rockefeller who stressed economic aid to developing nations to ward off communism as Eisenhower's Special Assistant on Foreign Affairs in 1954. After all, Byington had participated in the wildly successful implementation of Marshall Plan in Italy. The combination of Secretary of State Dulles and his brother Allen Dulles as CIA director led to an increased role of the CIA in foreign policy formulation and execution. Byington remained suspicious of what he perceived as the agency's amateur methods of operation and understanding of foreign situations. In 1953, along with Defense and CIA officials, he was a member of the Lenap Committee which provided wrote recommendation reports to the Psychological Strategy Board for Western Europe.<sup>814</sup> The PSB was responsible for the Demagnetize Plan of 1952 which sought to combat the influence of, and eventually outlaw, the Italian Communist Party.

In February 1953, President Eisenhower nominated Clare Boothe Luce as Ambassador to Rome. As Chief of WE, Byington briefed Luce on her upcoming assignment.<sup>815</sup> The former congresswoman asked him to return to Rome as her Deputy Chief of Mission, but he had already engineered a transfer to Madrid in order to reprise his role as Ambassador James

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<sup>814</sup>See: "Third Report to the Director of the Psychological Strategy Board with Regard to Implementation of PSB D-14c", March 5, 1953, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP80-01065A000200120004-9.pdf> Accessed May 20, 2016. For a detailed analysis of post-war psychological warfare see: M. Del Pero, "The United States and 'Psychological Warfare' in Italy, 1948-1955", in *Journal of American History*, Vol. 87, No. 4 (Mar., 2001), pp. 1304-1334.

<sup>815</sup> On Luce's ambassadorship see: G. Borzoni, "La vicenda di Clare Boothe Luce, ambasciatrice degli Stati Uniti in Italia (1953-1956)", in C. Dau Novelli (editor), *Nel segno dell'empowerment femminile: donne e democrazia in Italia e nel mondo*, Aipsa, Cagliari, 2007.

Dunn's Deputy Chief of Mission.<sup>816</sup> Furthermore, Byington, who had significant experience dealing with the press, feared Luce's outspoken nature would lead to public gaffes in a delicate diplomatic situation. His concerns were prescient as Luce gained a certain notoriety for threatening to cut offshore procurement contracts with Italian businesses with a communist workforce. It must be noted that this policy was developed by the PSB in Washington D.C. and executed by Luce in line with the Eisenhower administration. In the transition period before Luce's arrival in Rome, the embassy was administered by Byington's long-time friend, Chargé d'Affaires Elbridge Durbrow. William J. Crockett who was Counselor for Administration at the embassy from 1954 to 1958 recalled the conflict between Ambassador Luce and Durbrow:

The relationships between Luce and Durbrow were not very good because she thought that she knew more about being an Ambassador and about US-Italian relations than anyone else. She thought she knew more about the internal Italian political scene than her DCM. She was Catholic and had direct access to the Pope. [...] She also had direct access to President Eisenhower. She didn't rely upon a DCM's advice on policy issues. Durbrow certainly wasn't interested in the management of the Embassy. So there was always a tension between the two—turf fights.

In 1953, Byington continued to support the inclusion of the National Monarchist Party in the government majority. He found opposition to this endeavor from his young subordinate Thomas Fina, then serving on the Italian Desk, who favored strengthening the socialist trade unions, first the FIL, and then the UIL.<sup>817</sup> Fina's recommendations also entered into conflict with the principal desk officer William E. Knight who had been a protégé of Byington in Rome. According to Fina, Byington was "much more important" and "had, shall we say, even

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<sup>816</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 64. The author speculates that Byington feared Luce's unreliability nature in a diplomatic setting.

<sup>817</sup> Fina was born in 1924 in Allentown, Pennsylvania, his father was an immigrant from Southern Italy. In World War II he served in the U.S. Army Air Force in Italy on a tour of duty that included assignments in Naples, Florence, and Milan. After the war he studied at Harvard with Giorgio La Piana before returning to Florence in 1950 to study with the historian Gaetano Salvemini, then living in the Villa Frescobaldi.

more conservative on the subject than Bill Knight” and along with Clare Boothe Luce “really wanted the King back.”<sup>818</sup> Differently, Fina became an early supporter of the “Opening to the Left”.

In the first half of the 1950s, the long institutional memory in Via Veneto, as well as a command of Italian language, and a feel for the situation on the ground were important factors which led to the establishment of a club mentality at the highest levels of the embassy. As the years passed, select career Foreign Service officers and CIA men held the keys to the castle of American representation in Italy.<sup>819</sup> The administrative officer Crockett recalled:

But in Rome, we ran into the “club,” which consisted of the DCM, the Political and Economic Counselors and the CIA Station Chief. [...] The first DCM that I worked with was Elbridge Durbrow, who was an old hand in the Foreign Service -- traditional in many ways. He had a very violent temper. He would swear and curse and kick things. [...] There was a distinct and obvious different relationships among the old hands than there was between them and the Foreign Service staff or the new members of the "club" like myself. The old hands had an obvious understanding, trust and rapport among each other that did extend to non-club members.<sup>820</sup>

The old Italian hands like Durbrow who had served four years in Italy under fascism would have found it difficult to justify their close relationships with elements who had supported and benefitted from former fascists.

The club mentality was also fostered by the fact that the important interlocutors occupying cabinet positions in the Italian government did not change. Thomas Fina recalled in a 1992 interview that “Italy is an astonishing country in which a very small number of people make the decisions. They all know each other, half of them are related to each other, and even

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<sup>818</sup> ADST interview, Thomas W. Fina with Charles Stuart Kennedy, May 21, 1992.

<sup>819</sup> Three of the Italian hands, Byington, Horsey, and Jones were also assigned to cover Spanish affairs during the Franco dictatorship due to the pairing of Italian and Spanish affairs in the State Department. Horsey worked at the Spanish geographic desk in Washington from 1945-1946, whereas Jones (1949-1953) and Byington Jr. (1953-1957) were both Counselor of Embassy in Spain in the years when the United States acquired military bases in that country.

<sup>820</sup> ADST interview William J. Crockett with Thomas Stern, June 20, 1990. Crockett was born in Western Kansas in 1914 had served as a shipping administration in Italy from 1944-1945 before entering the State Department in 1950.

though they may be political adversaries, they may be personal friends, or family friends, for many, many years.”<sup>821</sup> Clearly, Fina exaggerated but with few exceptions until the 1970s the interior and defense ministries remained the exclusive domain of the Christian Democratic party and were repeatedly administered by the same individuals. Due to the constantly changing governments and the concentration of power in the hands of the national government, the Interior Minister often played an outsized role in the administration of the country.<sup>822</sup> Therefore, when high ranking Foreign Service officers returned to Italy, they dealt with the same individuals that they had known on previous assignments.

### **Ambassador Clare Boothe Luce**

Ambassador Luce’s first major challenge stemmed from the results of the Italian national elections of June 7, 1953, in which the Christian Democrats lost eight percentage points from their 1948 result of over 48% in both the Senate and Chamber of Deputies.<sup>823</sup> Luce wrote directly to President Eisenhower on November 3, 1953, to outline the dramatic possibility of a communist triumph through the ballot box. (See Appendix H) Byington responded to Luce’s assessment of the Italian political situation on November 12 with a long memorandum to his superior, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Livingston Merchant. (See Appendix I) In the event that the communist threat worsened, Byington foresaw the establishment of a union of anticommunist parties, and in a more drastic situation, a right wing *coup d’état*. Byington dreaded communist sabotage of the democratic political system from within but was not an alarmist.<sup>824</sup> Still, it is fairly clear that he did not personally associate himself with the U.S. foreign policy by prefacing a statement with the qualifier “with both

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<sup>821</sup> ADST interview Thomas W. Fina with Charles Stuart Kennedy, May 21, 1992.

<sup>822</sup> The Defense Minister was usually a Christian Democrat with occasional Social Democrats and Republicans. The first Socialist was Lelio Lagorio from 1980-1983.

<sup>823</sup> Senator Joseph McCarthy’s influence in the United States reached its highest point in the first six months of 1953.

<sup>824</sup> Ironically, as Second Secretary of the U.S. Legation to Yugoslavia from 1939 to 1941, Byington had been a first-hand witness to the Axis attempts to destabilize that country through fifth-column activities.

U.S. political ideology and U.S. foreign policy.” Byington’s three-plus years in Washington D.C. coincided with the height of Senator McCarthy’s influence in national politics and he was relieved to leave for Madrid later that month.

In late November 1953, Ambassador Luce visited Naples and sought to obtain the cooperation of Achille Lauro in order to foster the creation of a new conservative democratic party in the Italian political system.<sup>825</sup> Around this time the ambassador extended another invitation to Byington to return to Rome as embassy counselor which the latter again declined.<sup>826</sup> Both Byington and then embassy counselor Durbrow were familiar with Lauro from their service in Naples in the 1930s.<sup>827</sup> Luce commented in a 1986 oral interview that Lauro was the most difficult political element to manage in Italy during her ambassadorship.<sup>828</sup>

As noted by the historian Graham Stuart: “It goes without saying that a diplomat should always be on the friendliest relations possible with the foreign correspondents of the newspapers of his own country. They can be of inestimable use to him and their ill will can do him considerable harm.”<sup>829</sup> Dating back to his assignment in Belgrade from 1939 to 1941, Byington was a friend and useful source of information of the *New York Times* journalist Cy Sulzberger who later became chief of the paper’s European bureau.<sup>830</sup> Typical of the Cold War relationship between the State Department and American journalists, Byington and Sulzberger constituted a functional unit. Of Ambassador Luce, Sulzberger noted in his memoirs on March 5, 1954, likely echoing Byington’s sentiments:

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<sup>825</sup> See: F. Robbe, “Gli Stati Uniti e Achille Lauro negli anni Cinquanta: Storia di un incontro impossibile” in *Nuova Storia Contemporanea*, year 15, No. 4, July-August 2011.

<sup>826</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 64. The author speculates that Byington was worried about Luce’s unreliability as ambassador.

<sup>827</sup> Elbridge Durbrow interview with John T. Mason Jr., May 5, 1981, Columbia University.

<sup>828</sup> ADST interview, Clare Booth Luce with Ann Miller Morin, June 19, 1986.

<sup>829</sup> G.H. Stuart, *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*, p. 176.

<sup>830</sup> Homer Byington III, in *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 176 notes that the Byingtons were close friends of the Sulzbergers. Cy visited Byington in Naples in 1946. In the summer of 1952 the Byingtons visited the Sulzbergers at Saranac Lake in the Adirondack region of New York. Sulzberger’s uncle Arthur Hays Sulzberger was the publisher of the *New York Times* from 1936 to 1961.

I have a feeling that she is now messing with some really bad scheme, having tried to climb aboard the bandwagon of an anticipated De Gasperi election victory last summer — which did not materialize — by warning that American aid would be withdrawn from Italy unless the proper party won. Two days ago she called on Scelba, the new prime minister, and spent a couple of hours with him although he hasn't yet been confirmed by Parliament. She also flew down to Naples to see Admiral Fechteler. I have a dreary suspicion she is trying to cook up some kind of violent action to insure that the communists are not going to gain power in Italy. And if she has a hand in it, I gravely fear it is going to be a fiasco.<sup>831</sup>

Durbrow recalled in a 1981 oral interview that “the one group we didn't try to press too far was the far right, the neofascists really - they weren't fascists, this was '55 - but they had that label”.<sup>832</sup> He confirmed that the embassy had the support of Secretary of State Dulles and the CIA regarding assistance to the non-communist trade unions.

One way and another, we worked on everything we could work on, getting to know people and talking to them about the threat. I tried to use my years of experience in Moscow to explain what life is like behind the curtain, you don't ever want to get behind the curtain permanently. [...] We all worked together, and MAAG and the Pentagon. People say that's interfering in the internal affairs of a country. It is not. The United States is so powerful, economically, militarily and otherwise, any time they sneeze it does something to someone's internal affairs, whatever it might be.<sup>833</sup>

Durbrow totaled six years of service in Italy. In retirement he recalled that “of all the countries I've served in, except the United States, I liked Italy best. I spoke Italian fairly well, could understand it, read it easily, so that was helpful.”<sup>834</sup>

The career diplomats who entered the Foreign Service as young men in the 1930s such as Byington and Durbrow, and had run the embassy from 1947 to 1955, were not present in Italy

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<sup>831</sup> C.L. Sulzberger, *A Long Row of Candles: Memoirs and Diaries 1934-1954*, Toronto, The Macmillan Company 1969, p. 974.

<sup>832</sup> Elbridge Durbrow interview with John T. Mason Jr., May 5, 1981, Columbia University.

<sup>833</sup> Ibid.

<sup>834</sup> Elbridge Durbrow interview with John T. Mason Jr., May 5, 1981, Columbia University.

in the late 1950s as they reached the level of ambassador. At the same time, under the direction of Allen Dulles, the CIA expanded its footprint in the execution of foreign policy. In Italy, beginning in 1953 the CIA agent William Colby was under cover as an embassy political officer. Given the frequent turnover at the embassy it became difficult for the State Department to manage secret relationships with Italian interlocutors. With the passing of time and the improvement of communications some Foreign Service officers who were no longer needed for intelligence work tended to revert to being the “clerk at the end of the wire”. For example, Minister Counselor in Rome from 1955-1958, John D. Jernegan, had no prior experience in Italy while backing up the political nominee Luce and her successor James David Zellerbach. On the other hand, the diplomats who had been lower-ranking members of the establishment in wartime Washington could not be shut out. Through his wife, who had entered the OSS in 1942, and through his own long experience Byington maintained many contacts in the intelligence community. His younger sister Jeannette (born 1909) spoke both French and Italian fluently and had a distinguished career in the National Security Agency and his friend, the *New York Times* journalist Cy Sulzberger was often in contact with Allen Dulles.

### **3.8 The Spanish Connection, 1953-1957**

After World War II, Spain remained economically and politically isolated from most of the rest of Europe. In 1949, Pat McCarran, the hardline anticommunist Democratic senator from Nevada met General Franco and became convinced that the Spanish dictator had been “unfairly maligned in the American press”.<sup>835</sup> From that point on the senator fought to alter the Truman administration’s policy toward Franco by twice introducing bills for \$50 million in aid to Spain as part of the Marshall Plan assistance to Western Europe.<sup>836</sup> While McCarran sought to strengthen ties with the regime for the purpose of anticommunism, his fellow

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<sup>835</sup> R. Carter and J. Scott, *Choosing to Lead: Understanding Congressional Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2009, pp. 89-90.

<sup>836</sup> Ibid. Spain had not been invited to participate in the Marshall plan at its outset in 1947.

Democrat Truman remained hostile due to Franco's pro-Axis stance during World War II. The president was also wary of a potential backlash in public opinion and waited until February 1951 to send an ambassador to Madrid (the financier and part-time diplomat Stanton Griffis).<sup>837</sup> Until his retirement in late January 1952, Griffis paved the way for a new American relationship with Franco by carrying out negotiations to establish naval and air facilities on Spanish territory. In this period Spain was a meeting ground for neofascists from various countries whose ideology had been discredited in the other major European countries. These activities had the blessing of the Spanish police and in 1951, Otto Skorzeny, Hitler's former commando chief, attended a diplomatic reception in Madrid, traveled throughout the country, and visited Spanish Morocco.<sup>838</sup>

The Eisenhower administration, represented by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, was much more aggressive in establishing closer ties to Spain and continued the pre-existing financial assistance to the regime in exchange for concessions of military facilities on Spanish soil. On March 9, 1953, the CIA director Allen Dulles forwarded a memorandum to Foreign Service officer Outerbridge Horsey that identified Spain as "the most anticommunist country in Western Europe and thus a natural ally for the United States."<sup>839</sup> A month later, on April 9, Eisenhower nominated James Dunn as Ambassador to Madrid. At this time, Dunn had the reputation as the most effective American diplomat and an agreement allowing the United States to use military bases on Spain soil was signed the following September.

After his nomination Dunn asked Byington to serve again as his embassy counselor. The latter leapt at the opportunity to return to the field after three years in Washington. He had a

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<sup>837</sup> Griffis had previously served as U.S. Ambassador to Poland, Egypt, and Argentina.

<sup>838</sup> "Fascists Clinging to Hope of Returning to Power", *New York Times*, May 29, 1951, p. 8.

<sup>839</sup> Dulles to Horsey, March 9, 1953, CIA FOIA Reading Room, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP80R01731R001300290002-9.pdf> In 1946, Outerbridge Horsey as head of the Spanish Desk in Washington had opposed the interruption of diplomatic relations with Spain because he "believed there was little that the United States could do to influence the Franco regime." See: Alexander H. Uhl, "State Department Split On How to Block Action On Franco", *The Gazette and Daily* (York, Pennsylvania), June 10, 1946, p. 3. Uhl underlines the differences between several former Office of War Information (OWI) officials who were less favorable to Franco and the career State Department officials such as Horsey who eventually established close relations with the regime in the 1950s.

solid working relationship with Dunn and Franco's dictatorship occupied the ideological space that straddled the line between monarchism and neofascism that Byington's Neapolitan contacts inhabited. In Spain, Byington established close ties with the Spanish aristocracy; in particular he depended on Santiago Bernabeu for information in his political reports.<sup>840</sup> Bernabeu had fought with Franco's forces in the Spanish Civil War and was the long-time president of the Real Madrid soccer team which served as an ornament of the regime. While it was inevitable that Dunn and Byington would deal with government and church authorities, they ignored the clandestine opposition to Franco's regime. Differently than in Italy, in Spain they followed the guidelines of Graham Stuart's *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*: "one of the fundamental rules of diplomatic practice stipulates that a public minister must not interfere in the internal affairs of the state to which he is accredited."<sup>841</sup>

In early 1955, Ambassador Dunn was replaced by John Davis Lodge of the famous Republican political dynasty who was without diplomatic experience. Counselor Byington presented Lodge to the local government and aristocratic society and attempted to forestall the new ambassador's gaffes. In time, Lodge became very influential in Spain as recalled by Foreign Service officer Milton Barall: "I want to say this. Lodge had a lot of critics, too, but he was the right man, right time, right place in Spain at that time. Because Spain was run by Franco and a handful of people, a lot of them aristocrats, with whom John Davis Lodge felt quite comfortable."<sup>842</sup> As a sign of the ambassador's influence, his brother-in-law, Foreign Service officer D. Chadwick Braggiotti became U.S. Consul General in Seville in March 1957.<sup>843</sup> Lodge was close to Vice-President Richard Nixon: they had served as freshmen Republican U.S. Representatives together from 1947 to 1949 and were founding members of the informal Chowder and Marching Club which plotted Republican legislative strategy. Nixon stopped for an extremely brief visit in Majorca in the summer of 1955 which was

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<sup>840</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p.68.

<sup>841</sup> G.H. Stuart, *American Diplomatic and Consular Practice*, p. 196.

<sup>842</sup> ADST interview, Milton Barall with Charles Stuart Kennedy, April 10, 1990.

<sup>843</sup> Braggiotti was born in Italy but married an American citizen.

organized at the last minute by Chargé d’Affaires Byington.<sup>844</sup> Secretary of State Dulles visited Madrid in early November 1955. An article on the front page of the *New York Times* on the occasion of the visit declared that Dulles and Franco “reaffirmed the spirit of collaboration between the United States and Spain” in a “great display of cordiality”.<sup>845</sup> In Madrid, Byington frequently saw his long-time friend Giulio Del Balzo who was the Italian Ambassador to Spain from January 22, 1955 until July 25, 1958.

During their roughly four years in Spain from November 1953 to October 1957 the Byingtons occasionally traveled to Paris for a week’s stay where they visited long-time friend Theodore Achilles who was Deputy Chief of Mission in Paris.<sup>846</sup> They also likely renewed their relationship with the Duke and Duchess of Windsor who lived at Moulin de la Tuilerie in Neuilly 15 miles southwest of Paris, and possibly the Windsor’s friend Oswald Mosley who lived at the Temple de la Gloire just a few miles away.<sup>847</sup> As noted by the historian Graham Macklin: “But whilst the Duke and his concubine remained on the margins of social acceptability, Mosley remained ‘beyond the pale’ [...] Mosley’s friendship with the Windsors constituted the ‘greatest embarrassment’ for the British Embassy whose staff were instructed not to have any dealings with them.”<sup>848</sup>

The Dunn and Lodge missions to Spain were a significant diplomatic success for the United States which secured the long-term use of military bases which were unlikely to be overrun in a Soviet invasion of Western Europe. The role played by the two American ambassadors also led Spain to begin its journey toward integration in Europe exemplified by its associate membership in the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) beginning in February 1958. That same year Spanish agricultural output finally reached its pre-civil war

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<sup>844</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 73-74. The two men would have already been acquainted with each other from Nixon’s trip to Rome in 1947.

<sup>845</sup> “Dulles and Franco Affirm Close Ties in Madrid Talk”, *New York Times*, November 2, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>846</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 70.

<sup>847</sup> A. Sebba, “Wallis Simpson, ‘That Woman’ After the Abdication”, *New York Times Magazine*, November 1, 2011. Internet Source. Byington’s long-time friend Cy Sulzberger was invited to dinner parties by the Windsors’ orbit in the early 1950s in Paris.

<sup>848</sup> G. Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black: Sir Oswald Mosley and the Resurrection of British Fascism*, London, I.B. Tauris, 2007, p. 138.

level.<sup>849</sup> The following year Spain joined the International Monetary Fund and World Bank which quickly brought the nation's autarchic economic practices to an end. Foreign investment increased sevenfold from 1958 to 1960.<sup>850</sup>

### **Homer M. Byington Jr. - Ambassador to Malaya**

When on home leave from Spain, Byington met with influential members of the Protestant establishment in the United States such as fellow Yale graduate Thomas Stilwell Lamont of J.P. Morgan, Kingsley Mabon of the Wall Street firm Mabon-Nugent, and James Ford Bell, a major shareholder in the General Mills Corporation.<sup>851</sup> These powerful men were crucial political backers as Byington sought to climb the last stair toward gaining his own ambassadorship. With their support he was rewarded for the successful mission in Spain as President Eisenhower nominated him as the first U.S. Ambassador to the newly independent Federation of Malaya in October 1957.<sup>852</sup> Shortly thereafter, the Byingtons were invited by John D. Rockefeller Jr. to the latter's family estate of Kykuit along the Hudson River.<sup>853</sup> Like his mentor Dunn, in Malaya Byington concocted an image of himself that did not correspond to his middle class and unassuming family upbringing and was at times poorly received by younger colleagues for his aristocratic tendencies and attention to appearances. Robert Drexler, a subordinate in Malaya recalled of Byington:

Yes, of the old school, and he ran the embassy in a colonial style. We men were all required to wear white cotton or linen suits. The Post Report said that full dress was required of officers, that is, silk hat, white tie, tails, as well as morning coat, white and black dinner jackets, and white suits. And Byington changed suits twice a day at the

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<sup>849</sup> E. Solsten and S. W. Meditz, eds. *Spain: A Country Study*, Washington D.C. GPO for the Library of Congress, 1988, p. 142.

<sup>850</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>851</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 74-75, Lamont's father, Thomas W. Lamont, as Chairman of J.P. Morgan had been responsible for the \$100 million loan to Mussolini's government in 1925 as part of the American attempt to stabilize the country.

<sup>852</sup> He rose to the rank of Career Minister in June 1958.

<sup>853</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 183.

Embassy. He would come in looking starched in the morning, go home for lunch, dump his suit, put on a fresh one, and looked fairly well starched throughout the day. The rest of us wilted. I fell afoul of him very early when I was observed going to the men's room without my jacket, and my supervisor called me in and said the Ambassador took a very dim view of this. It was a small post, but run in a very stiff way. His wife, known as "Lady Jane", made frequent shopping trips to Singapore, and all the other wives were required to turn out at the airport or the rail station to see her off, wearing hats and gloves, in a tropical climate. This was also of course, the style of the British who were still there in important numbers, and whose style the Byingtons found attractive.

Second Secretary Howard Schaffer described the iconoclastic ambassador:

He was the typical old line Foreign Service officer and the son of an old line Foreign Service officer who for years had been the head of the Office of Personnel. He had never been east of Suez. He didn't like the informality that governed the relationship among the staff and the relationship it had with outsiders. I found Ambassador and Mrs. Byington very difficult to deal with. [...] I guess I didn't know how to deal with Byington. I was used to the Wright informality which obviously was not the Foreign Service that Byington was accustomed to. I think the ambassador did not feel that I had treated him with proper respect. He objected to the way I dressed—he had insisted that all officers wear coat and tie; that was absurd in that climate. [...] When I was leaving, Byington let me know that he had been very close to requesting my reassignment several months earlier. He did vent his unhappiness in my efficiency report, which made me quite concerned about my future. My situation was illustrative of what happens when a stuffy EUR type is plunked down in newly independent nation in a non-European region. The fact that he had arrived having hurt himself on ship board, requiring that he present his credentials while on crutches, made him even more sensitive to real or imagined slights. Byington's standing, with me at least, was not helped by his being married to a dreadful woman—a "dragon lady" of the old school.<sup>854</sup>

Jane Byington believed that diplomats should have wealthy wives. In this she found agreement with the founding fathers of the Foreign Service who had lobbied against pay

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<sup>854</sup> ADST interview, Howard B. Schaffer with Thomas Stern, March 10, 1997.

increases for diplomats, in order to prevent the entrance of poorer and less socially polished elements into the State Department. As an ambassadress she modeled some aspects of her behavior on the Duchess of Windsor: the two women were assiduous social climbers obsessed with rank and prestige.<sup>855</sup> For years the Duchess of Windsor remained embittered about the treatment reserved for her husband by the British royal family; Jane adopted the same outlook as her husband's career prospectives dimmed in the early 1960s when President Kennedy appointed ambassadors whom she considered socially inferior.<sup>856</sup> Considering her social ambition, it must have been particularly galling to have established close ties to the heirs of two major European powers, only to see the Windsors lose influence and the Savoy dynasty swept away by the June 2, 1946, referendum. Both Jane and the Duchess convinced themselves that they held supernatural powers. For example, the journalist Elsa Maxwell wrote: "One incident which stands out unpleasantly in my memory is the Duchess' reaction to the death of Iles Brody, shortly after he authored his unflattering book, *Gone with the Windsors*. 'See!' she said, snapping her fingers. 'See what happens to them when they go against me!'"<sup>857</sup> Similarly, problems arose in post-war Naples when an American code clerk assigned to Homer Byington "expected Jane to treat him as a social equal, which she was not about to do. He started to make trouble, but he died in an airplane crash before being able to inflict too much damage."<sup>858</sup> Jane more than half believed that she had "willed" his death with her supernatural powers.<sup>859</sup> In November 1959, the Byingtons' son, Homer M. Byington III,

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<sup>855</sup> In World War II, the Duchess rankled British authorities with expensive shopping trips in the United States while the British people suffered the consequences of the conflict. Likewise, in the years 1957-1961 when Homer Byington was ambassador to Malaya, Jane patterned herself on the Duchess and became a notorious figure in the Foreign Service for forcing the embassy wives to wear white gloves in the sweltering tropical heat upon greeting her at the airport on return from her extravagant shopping trips.

<sup>856</sup> At the same time, Homer Byington's friends among the career diplomats, Theodore Achilles and Edward Page Jr. were also not given new ambassadorships by Kennedy. Elbridge Durbrow who was Consul General in Singapore was also not given another posting.

<sup>857</sup> "What the Duchess of Windsor Won't Tell in her Memoirs", Elsa Maxwell, *The Washington Post and Times Herald*, December 18, 1955. p. 2.

<sup>858</sup> H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 168.

<sup>859</sup> Ibid.

born in Naples in 1934, was assigned to the U.S. Consulate in Genoa where he remained until resigning from the Foreign Service in 1962.

### 3.9 The Final Battles, 1960-1973

#### Outerbridge Horsey and the “Opening to the left”

Outerbridge Horsey returned to Rome as deputy chief of mission from 1959 to 1962 and was a staunch defender of the Christian Democrats, particularly Giulio Andreotti.<sup>860</sup> Horsey’s official role in opposing the center-left experiment is accurately appraised by the historian Leopoldo Nuti.<sup>861</sup> Oral interviews provide further evidence of Horsey’s antagonism toward the Italian Socialist Party (PSI). Prior to his arrival, Embassy First Secretary George Lister had developed a network of contacts in the PSI with the approval of Ambassador James Zellerbach who, resigned after Kennedy’s election in 1960, and returned to New York on December 10, 1961.<sup>862</sup> According to Kennedy special advisor Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., after Zellerbach’s departure, Horsey applied severe pressure in an unsuccessful attempt to ban Lister’s ties to the socialists.<sup>863</sup> Around this time the American lawyer and professor Richard Gardner traveled to Italy to attend a conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization.<sup>864</sup> Gardner was ordered

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<sup>860</sup> U. Gentiloni-Silveri, *L’Italia e la nuova frontiera: Stati Uniti e Centro-Sinistra: 1958-1965*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1998, Horsey was Deputy Director of the State Department’s Office of British Commonwealth and Northern European affairs in 1954, he was promoted to director the following year. From 1957 to 1959 he served as Minister Counselor of the Tokyo Embassy under his former colleague in Naples, Douglas MacArthur II.

<sup>861</sup> See: L. Nuti, *Gli Stati Uniti e l’apertura a sinistra: Importanza e limiti della presenza americana in Italia*, Rome, Laterza, 1999.

<sup>862</sup> President Kennedy did not nominate Zellerbach’s replacement, Frederick Reinhardt until February 28, 1961. On the question of the State Department’s role in the “Opening to the Left” see: U. Gentiloni-Silveri, *L’Italia e la nuova frontiera: Stati Uniti e Centro-Sinistra: 1958-1965*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1998.

<sup>863</sup> A. Schlesinger Jr. in “The Kennedy Administration and the Center-Left” The International Symposium “One Hundred Years of Italian Democratic Socialism, 1892-1992” was held at the Stephen Smith Center at the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston on March 18, 19, and 20, 1993. The liberal Schlesinger remembered Horsey as a “self-righteous fellow of exceedingly rigid right-wing views.”

<sup>864</sup> Gardner was Jimmy Carter’s ambassador to Rome from 1977 to 1981.

by Schlesinger to meet Ugo La Malfa of the Italian Republican Party, in order to discuss the falling electoral support of the Christian Democrats and the possible inclusion of the socialists in the government majority. According to Gardner, Horsey insisted that La Malfa was “too friendly to the communists” and attempted to forbid the former from meeting him.<sup>865</sup> Samuel Lewis, then serving on the Italian Desk recalled Horsey’s predicament:

"Outer" was convinced that if the Socialists ever got into the government, that the world would come to an end, and if he ever talked to them in any encouraging way, that that would lead to them coming into government. So he tried to cut off even those rather tenuous contacts that the embassy had with the Socialists before he arrived in the department, in the Office of West European Affairs, we were very anxious to get the reporting on Socialist and Communist affairs, and were reduced to encouraging the political officers out there with the contacts to send us back-channel "official-informal" letters, because "Outer" would never allow their dispatches, much less their telegrams, to get out of the embassy.<sup>866</sup>

Clearly, Horsey understood well the importance of symbolic gestures in the specific context of the Opening to the Left. Foreign Service officer William C. Sherman assigned to Rome from 1960 to 1963 recalled of Horsey:

Of course, he saw current events through a prism of long experience in Italy which went back to the pre-war days; it was difficult therefore to argue with him in a historical context when you hadn’t had the same experience. [...] He had a lot of personal connections in the Vatican. His sister was a nun and he was a very devoted Catholic. [...] Horsey supported the conservatives and so did some of Horsey's successors. [...] No one went so far as to support the MSI (the crypto-Fascist Party) nor the Monarchist Party.<sup>867</sup>

The comments of Lewis and Sherman demonstrate a generational difference between the Foreign Service officers who had begun their careers in the 1930s and served in Italy prior to World War II such Horsey, Byington, and Durbrow, and the younger group of functionaries

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<sup>865</sup> Richard N. Gardner, *Mission Italy: On the Front Lines of the Cold War*; Lanham, Maryland, Rowman and Littlefield, 2005, p. 11.

<sup>866</sup> ADST interview, Samuel W. Lewis with Peter Jessup, August 9, 1998.

<sup>867</sup> ADST interview, William C. Sherman with Thomas Stern, October 27, 1993.

who were largely favorable to the socialist participation in the government majority. The lawyer Gardner, born in 1927, had attended the same elite East Coast institutions of Yale and Harvard as his elders but did not support the past attempts of the United States to encourage the Christian Democrats to widen the government majority by an opening to Lauro's monarchists. From 1947 to 1952 Horsey had been a pupil of Ambassador Dunn who was known for furtively supporting reactionary elements. For Horsey, in the case of the Opening to the Left, the ends justified the means which justified his attempts to silence opposition to his preferred outcome.

The older Foreign Service experts were joined in their opposition to the socialists by their understudy William Knight who headed the Italian and Austrian Desk from 1961 to 1963 and considered the opening risky and inevitable regardless of American policy. Knight recalled that in the Kennedy years, the increased attention on the socialist question

was partly that there was a new administration, but primarily it was because of events in Italy. [...] The Italians themselves were more and more preoccupied with this as a possible way out of their impasse in which the old center party formula could no longer rule. [...] There was, in effect, a coalescence of opinion between two different functional sections of the State Department and the CIA which cut across agency lines. In both agencies the operators, in effect, were in agreement among themselves on one position and the intelligence analysts were in general agreement on another.<sup>868</sup>

President Kennedy viewed the State Department during the Eisenhower years as inefficient and in need of new energy, a view shared by his special assistant Schlesinger. Differently, career diplomats like Horsey perceived criticism of the department by presidential advisors as a self-serving effort by "political appointees in the White House" who were looking to make a name for themselves in the new administration.<sup>869</sup> Interestingly, Kennedy nominated the career diplomat Frederick Reinhardt as his ambassador to Italy. Reinhardt recalled that while the president looked favorably upon the possibility of the "Opening to the Left" it was really

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<sup>868</sup> ADST interview, William E. Knight with William B. Jones, May 18, 1978.

<sup>869</sup> See: Oral interview John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Outerbridge Horsey with William W. Moss, April 15, 1971.

his advisors who were taking a much more aggressive approach in actively encouraging the development. Like Knight, Reinhardt considered risky the prospect of a specific American endorsement of the opening.<sup>870</sup> Still, as recalled by Lewis, it was Horsey who continued to dominate the socialist question:

Oh, yes. He was a real Cold Warrior. He had been in Italy, of course, as political counselor in the early Fifties. [...] He was a real expert on Italy, he really knew the society and the politics better than any of his political officers ever hoped to, and he was a very powerful advocate and antagonist. Therefore, he pretty much ran the show, despite the Department's desire to shift the policy ten or 15 or 20 degrees. As long as "Outer" was there, the Socialists weren't going to get their nose into the tent.<sup>871</sup>

The mordant Horsey would surely have remembered Nenni's declaration in October 1950 that the Korean War was being fought for the liberation of Asiatic peoples from imperialism. On the occasion, Horsey had sarcastically singled out Nenni's prevarication on the question of socialist commitment to resist a potential invasion of Italy by the Soviet Union: "This is flaming patriotism, Pietro Nenni style."<sup>872</sup> Long-term relationships with Andreotti and the Vatican allowed Horsey to thwart Kennedy's agenda until October 1961 when his objections were overruled by the State Department which adopted a non-interference policy.<sup>873</sup> Shortly thereafter, in February 1962, Prime Minister Fanfani formed a new government with socialist support from outside the parliamentary majority.

Horsey continued to work against the possibility of the socialists entering the majority. In an oral interview from 1971, he reflected on the center-left issue during his time as deputy chief of mission:

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<sup>870</sup> See: Oral interview John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Frederick Reinhardt with Joseph E. O'Connor, November 1966. Reinhardt's subordinate Horace Torbert confirmed that the ambassador was opposed to the opening. See: ADST interview, Horace Torbert with Charles Stuart Kennedy, August 31, 1988. Reinhardt had served at AFHQ in Caserta in 1945. He had been the Director of the Office of European Affairs from 1948 to 1950 and Embassy Counselor in Paris from 1951 to 1955.

<sup>871</sup> ADST interview, Samuel W. Lewis with Peter Jessup, August 9, 1998.

<sup>872</sup> Horsey to State Department, September 28, 1950, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1946-1964, Box 74.

<sup>873</sup> G. Formigoni, *Storia d'Italia nella guerra fredda: (1943-1978)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2016, p. 291.

It was my view, and that of most of the officials of the United States government in Washington and in Rome with whom I dealt and of which I had knowledge, that the United States government should not intervene in this process. The process involved considerable risks, and the United States government was not in a position to repair damage or the consequences which might be caused by its action.<sup>874</sup>

Perhaps the most important Italian supporter of the Opening to the left was Enrico Mattei, the founder and president of ENI who had declared himself anti-American, contrary to NATO, and pro-neutral in an interview with Cyrus Sulzberger in May 1962.<sup>875</sup> Mattei's endeavors in foreign petroleum markets had greatly vexed American corporations such as Standard Oil of New Jersey and Gulf Oil the latter of which had battled ENI for control of oil deposits in Sicily. In fact, in September 1962, John McCloy a lawyer and advisor to Kennedy, traveled to Rome where among various oil executives he met the Gulf representative for Italy, Nicola Pignatelli di Aragona of the Neapolitan nobility.<sup>876</sup> According to the historian Leopoldo Nuti, these meetings ended with McCloy's determination that further cooperation with ENI was indeed possible. Pignatelli was certainly familiar to Homer M. Byington Jr. who had returned to Naples the preceding August; members of the U.S. foreign policy establishment feared that Mattei's importation of crude oil from the Soviet Union would increasingly bring Italy under Soviet influence.

On October 27, 1962, as the Cuban Missile Crisis was winding down, Mattei died in a mysterious plane crash in the town of Bascapè southeast of Milan's Linate Airport. The following morning, the Air Force General Ercole Savi, on the order of Defense Minister Andreotti, arrived on the scene to investigate the incident. The commission headed by Savi concluded in 1963 that it was impossible to establish the cause of the crash. Although the cause of the incident remains unknown, the scenario put forth by convicted *mafioso* Antonio

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<sup>874</sup> Oral interview John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Outerbridge Horsey with William W. Moss, April 15, 1971.

<sup>875</sup> L. Nuti, *Gli Stati Uniti e l'apertura a sinistra: Importanza e limiti della presenza americana in Italia*, Rome, Laterza, 1999, p. 531. Sulzberger was a friend of Horsey and Homer Byington Jr. who returned to Naples in August 1962.

<sup>876</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 533-534.

La Perna seems plausible, in short that elements of the Sicilian mafia, working alongside elements of American secret agents operating independently, had planted a bomb on Mattei's plane prior to its departure from Catania. While La Perna states that Mattei was assassinated as a favor to American oil interests, it seems more likely, as noted by Nuti, that Mattei's agreements with the Soviet Union would have been the primary motivation if he was indeed assassinated.<sup>877</sup> In 1994, it was determined through forensic evidence that an explosion had occurred onboard the aircraft prior to the crash.

On October 28, 1962, the day after Mattei's death, the Chief of the CIA station in Rome, Thomas Karamessines, wrote a dispatch to Washington regarding the incident that remains classified for national security reasons. Karamessines had been assigned to Rome in June 1960 and worked side by side with Horsey on a daily basis. On November 14, 1962, roughly two weeks after Mattei's death, President Kennedy nominated Horsey as U.S. Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, apparently to remove his continued opposition to the socialist experiment. The socialists entered the government majority on December 4, 1963. On September 16, 1970, the journalist Mauro De Mauro, who was investigating the final days of Enrico Mattei in Sicily, disappeared in Palermo and was never seen again. It is possible that De Mauro discovered the pact between mafia elements and the impending Borghese coup.<sup>878</sup> At the time of De Mauro's disappearance, Horsey was stationed at the consulate in Palermo. He retired from the Foreign Service in 1971.

### **Homer M. Byington Jr. Returns to Naples**

Another Italian hand who had a difficult relationship with President Kennedy was Homer M. Byington Jr. who, following standard procedure, tendered his resignation from his post as Ambassador to Malaya after the presidential inauguration in January 1961. Had the Republican ticket headed by Richard Nixon won the election of 1960, it is likely that

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<sup>877</sup> Ibid., p. 535.

<sup>878</sup> General Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa who investigated De Mauro's disappearance was also assassinated by the mafia in Palermo in 1982.

Byington would have received another ambassadorship, possibly even to Italy.<sup>879</sup> In any event, Byington's days as an ambassador were over due to an ideological housecleaning carried out by Kennedy's Under Secretary of State, the liberal New Dealer and anti-colonialist Chester Bowles.<sup>880</sup> It had become known that Byington ran the Malaya mission in a formal colonial style whereas the Kennedy administration pointed toward more progressive relations with the Third World as the key to winning hearts and minds in the intensely ideological Cold War. Bowles protégé, FSO Samuel Lewis recalled: "So the Under Secretary's office was staffed with these two outsiders, and Bowles, a real wild man for the bureaucracy, with all sorts of ideas about changing the role of the career versus the outsiders, bringing in a lot of fresh blood, sweeping out some of the tired blood and the State Department bureaucracy was horrified at the sight of Bowles in the Under Secretary's office."<sup>881</sup>

In addition to the perhaps misplaced antipathy from Bowles, Byington had a confrontation with Kennedy while serving in Belgrade from 1939 to 1941 (at the time Kennedy was an aide to his father Joseph at the London embassy.)<sup>882</sup> William W. Lehfeldt, Byington's deputy in Spain and at the Naples Consulate General from 1966-1969 recalled:

Homer had run afoul of the Kennedys at the beginning of World War II. He was in the embassy at Belgrade. He was duty officer one weekend and was down at the office. These two scruffy young men came wandering through and the guard called Homer and said, "These two kids are here and they want to read the classified reading file." Homer went down and talked to them and said, "Hell, no." They said, "Well, our father lets us do it all the time. I don't know why you won't." It turned out they were Joe and Jack Kennedy from London. At any rate, they never forgot him. Joe died but Jack never forgot him. When

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<sup>879</sup> It is perhaps more likely that John Lodge would have become U.S. Ambassador to Italy, given that his brother Henry Cabot Lodge was Nixon's running mate.

<sup>880</sup> Byington's friend Theodore Achilles was also rejected by Kennedy for ambassadorships to Poland and Australia. Edward Page Jr. who had been ambassador to Bulgaria in 1960 was also not given another ambassadorship.

<sup>881</sup> ADST interview, Samuel W. Lewis with Peter Jessup, August 9, 1998.

<sup>882</sup> H. Byington speculates that Bowles disliked Byington due to the latter's close relationship with John Lodge who had defeated the incumbent Bowles in the Connecticut gubernatorial election of 1950. See: H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, pp. 77-78.

Kennedy was elected, Homer had been first ambassador to what was then Malaysia. He wasn't about to get another ambassadorial post.<sup>883</sup>

Byington returned to Washington D.C. where he performed odd jobs in the department such as serving on the Foreign Service Examination Board.<sup>884</sup> This was a humiliating turn of events for an officer with the rank of career minister who had already served as ambassador. In fact, just the previous year President Eisenhower had named his long-time friend Theodore Achilles to the influential post of Counselor of the State Department. Byington was forced to wait until the summer of 1962 when the “old school network took care of him” by assigning him as U.S. Consul General in Naples which did not require approval from the White House or the U.S. Senate.<sup>885</sup> Although he would have preferred a second ambassadorship, the staff of the consulate general was larger than that of most embassies and the facility held enormous importance due to its role as liaison to NATO’s Allied Forces Southern Europe (AFSOUTH). Therefore, Byington returned another time to his birthplace in August 1962.<sup>886</sup> At the time his long-time friend Outerbridge Horsey was deputy chief of mission in Rome. Preoccupied with appearances, it was unthinkable for Byington to return to the chalet at the Villa Gallotti where he had lived as a vice- consul in the 1930s (the chalet had become the residence of the American Consul General in the postwar period.)<sup>887</sup> After briefly renting an apartment in the Vomero district, the Byingtons returned to Posillipo.

The Naples that Byington returned to in 1962 was markedly different than that of the immediate post-war period. Under the boisterous monarchist mayor Achille Lauro

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<sup>883</sup> ADST interview, William W. Lehfeldt with Charles Stuart Kennedy, April 29, 1994. It is possible that Kennedy and Byington became reacquainted in an unfriendly way at the UN Conference in San Francisco as Kennedy was then working as a journalist for the Hearst Corporation and Byington was the chief press officer of the State Department; the restrictions placed on the media at the UN Conference were widely panned. Joseph Kennedy, as Ambassador to the United Kingdom from March 1938 until October 1940, had kept a close eye on the activities of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, who visited the Byingtons in Naples in July 1938.

<sup>884</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 87.

<sup>885</sup> ADST interview, William W. Lehfeldt with Charles Stuart Kennedy, April 29, 1994.

<sup>886</sup> He replaced the retiring James Henderson, Consul General in Naples from 1955 to 1962.

<sup>887</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 90.

(1952-1958) the urban landscape had been transformed.<sup>888</sup> Just after Byington's arrival, the major motorway between Rome and Naples was opened to the public. In the early Sixties, the city experienced an economic boom partly due to increased investment from the special national fund for the Mezzogiorno. Along with a growing middle class, great improvements were registered in public infrastructure, education, health, and housing. After the Lauro phenomenon collapsed, the Christian Democrat Silvio Gava dominated local politics.

On September 6, 1962, Consul General Byington along with the Prefect Adolfo Memmo and Extraordinary Commissioner (city administrator) Federico D'Aiuto greeted the Democratic Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson and his entourage in Naples. Johnson praised Italy's economic development and programs for social reform. Regarding Italian national politics, Byington was firmly opposed to the center-left experiment and preferred the Eisenhower administration's more conservative line.<sup>889</sup> It is important to remember that Kennedy was the first president who was younger than Byington and he did not immediately command the respect of the foreign policy establishment. By 1962, the Cold War had endured 15 years and Kennedy's "flexible response" rhetoric on Soviet aggression was discouraging to long time anti-communists. Ironically, Kennedy visited Naples in the first days of July 1963 although no record of interaction between the president and Byington on this occasion has been found.

According to a CIA report, in January 1963 Prince Junio Valerio Borghese joined the *Centro di Via Medina*: a political-cultural association in Naples which sought to aid the parties of the extreme right in the forthcoming elections.<sup>890</sup> Borghese's impending arrival in the city was

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<sup>888</sup> Housing speculation in Naples is the subject of Francesco Rosi's film *Le mani sulla città*.

<sup>889</sup> Byington's opposition to the "Opening to the Left" was confirmed in my meeting with Homer M. Byington III in Manhattan on August 16, 2016. The Italian Socialist Party was initially hesitant to draw nearer to the area of government due its opposition to the United States' close relationship with Franco's Spain which Byington had helped to foster during his four years in Madrid. The historian Guido Formigoni identifies the socialists' worries over the American relationship with Spain as one of the reasons that delayed their embrace of further collaboration with the Christian Democrats. See: *Storia d'Italia nella guerra fredda: (1943-1978)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2016, p. 285.

<sup>890</sup> Francis Meloy to Unknown CIA Chief of Station, June 7, 1963, Available at CIA FOIA website: [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO\\_0022.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO_0022.pdf) Accessed November 26, 2016. Via Medina was the street in which a handful of Neapolitan monarchists fell in the aftermath of the June 2, 1946.

announced in the daily *Roma* on January 4.<sup>891</sup> According to *Il Mattino* on January 9, the prince and other elements of the Roman aristocracy met with Byington's close friend Prince Caracciolo. Until his death in 1987, Byington continued to believe that "Mediterranean peoples do not adapt well to democracy": an indication that his relationships with far right elements were not merely a means of applying pressure on the Christian Democrats which the goal of a more efficient administration of the State.<sup>892</sup> His vision coincided with Borghese's desire for a right-wing authoritarian solution to the communist problem.<sup>893</sup> As previously noted, Borghese had been in contact with Ambassador Dunn in 1949 and 1951 who worked alongside Byington on a daily basis for over five years. In the end on April 28, 1963, the Christian Democrats lost 4% from their 1958 total as the center-left formula did not have the effect of reducing communist appeal.

After a short-lived minority government led by the Christian Democrat Giovanni Leone, on December 5, 1963, Aldo Moro of the same party formed the first "organic" center-left government with Nenni's socialists in the government majority. The government proposed reforms to ameliorate difficult social conditions through improvement in education and public administration. With the participation of the socialists, especially in the person of Antonio Giolitti as Budget Minister, the move toward a more planned economy frightened large manufacturers who brought pressure to slow down the reforms and were supported by the majority of the Christian Democrats including the conservative President of the Republic Antonio Segni who remained wary of communist infiltration in the state apparatus.<sup>894</sup> Before Segni's January 1964 visit to Washington, Secretary of State Dean Rusk encouraged President Johnson to make it clear that the United States did not plan to intervene in order to weaken

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<sup>891</sup> *Roma*, January 4, 1963, p. 9.

<sup>892</sup> H.M. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 105.

<sup>893</sup> Interesting is that from 1963 to 1966 Giorgio Napolitano was secretary of the Neapolitan PCI federation.

<sup>894</sup> On Giolitti's role as Budget Minister see: G. Scroccu, *Alla ricerca di un socialismo possibile: Antonio Giolitti dal PCI al PSI*, Rome, Carocci, 2012, pp. 193-215.

Moro's government and to remain uncommitted if Segni suggested the creation of a line of communication with Washington which bypassed Moro's government.<sup>895</sup>

In March, Segni began to interfere with the government's action in an attempt to slow down the pace of reforms. Given these developments, Giovanni De Lorenzo, the General Commander of the Carabinieri and Chief of Staff of the Italian Army, formed three special carabinieri brigades in case the need for emergency intervention against the communists arose.<sup>896</sup> De Lorenzo's security plan, known as "Piano Solo", involved the occupation of political party headquarters and the arrest of communist political leaders and activists by the carabinieri without the direct involvement of other military branches. Moro's government resigned on June 26. In this period a close friend of Byington was the Admiral James Russell who was the Commander-in-Chief of NATO's Allied Forces Southern Europe from 1962 to 1965.<sup>897</sup> It is difficult to imagine that Byington was unaware of the political developments tied to General De Lorenzo given that he had been close to *carabinieri* generals since the 1940s but there are no specific indications that he encouraged this activity. John Holmes who served under Byington as vice-consul in Naples from 1962 to 1964 recalled: "I think that one can argue that although we had a tendency in Italy, to act as if it were our country to run, basically we are interested in a relatively small number of things in the country."<sup>898</sup>

In the first months of 1965, Byington toured the American Southwest where he gave speeches about the importance of foreign affairs and explained the functions of a diplomatic career. An article in the local *Phoenix Gazette* noted that "A clever diplomat is frowned upon by Minister Byington, who claims that our-man-over-there deals with so much confusion his biggest job is to be understood, not clever. Our diplomats also must be on good behavior because they live in constant goldfish bowls, and above all, they must get along with

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<sup>895</sup> G. Formigoni, *Storia d'Italia nella guerra fredda: (1943-1978)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2016, p. 315.

<sup>896</sup> De Lorenzo had been assigned to this position by Minister of Defense Andreotti on October 15, 1962.

<sup>897</sup> On July 2, 1964, the Neapolitan daily *Roma* reported an imposing military parade at Caserta presided over by Chief of Staff of the Italian Army General Giuseppe Aloja. See: C. Simula, "Una imponente parata delle truppe corazzate", *Roma*, July 2, 1964, p. 9.

<sup>898</sup> ADST interview, John W. Holmes with Charles Stuart Kennedy, March 18, 1996.

people.”<sup>899</sup> A highly visible posting like Naples in polarized Italy required a certain gravitas as missteps would be quickly exploited by communist propaganda. Always discreet, Byington was not prone to gaffes in public ceremonies or social representation. He reassured American audiences that Italy was not going to turn communist and observed that many votes for the Italian Communist Party were “more of a protest against economic conditions than a dedicated political movement. They are Italians first and Communists second.”<sup>900</sup> He knew that the stronger elements in the government were anticommunist and if matters deteriorated significantly, the NATO authorities based in Naples could intervene to prevent a communist takeover. This analysis paralleled his conclusions in November 1953 in response to Ambassador Luce’s alarm over a potential communist victory at the ballot box.<sup>901</sup>

After a long career spent in embassies (he had not served in a consulate since 1939) Byington was not interested in traditional consular work such as supervision of the visa department. From 1966 to 1969 he relied heavily upon his executive officer William Lehfeltdt to manage the office. Lehfeltdt described the circumstances of his assignment to Naples:

The Department thought I would be all right too because I could let him go on about his yachting and so forth, and run the consulate. Keep the staff from him and him from the staff, which is what my role was. Homer was a very conservative, hard-working bright guy in many ways. His wife was certainly conservative, hard-nosed, very bright, a trained lawyer. They knew Naples as no one could. [...] He was well connected. It was in the old aristocratic circles that he was best connected. He could speak Neapolitan dialect better than almost many of our employees in the consulate. So he entertained. [...] Of course Mrs. Byington had lots of money, they entertained well. I hesitate to use the word “royally” but they did and they got along well with the Admirals and Generals of AFSOUTH.<sup>902</sup>

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<sup>899</sup> “Italy Given Boost by Ex-Phoenician”, *Phoenix Gazette*, March 3, 1965, p. 8.

<sup>900</sup> “Italy Won’t Go Red Asserts Ambassador”, *Tucson Daily Citizen*, February 27, 1965, p. 5.

<sup>901</sup> See: Appendix I, p. 308.

<sup>902</sup> ADST interview, William W. Lehfeltdt with Charles Stuart Kennedy, April 29, 1994.

Lehfeldt's testimony raises an interesting question as to why the department needed to maintain a distance between Byington and the staff. In addition to being a heavy drinker Byington's views on social issues did not progress with the passing of time and by the 1960s he was prone to offensive statements regarding race and religion.<sup>903</sup> He had never fully adopted nor embraced American social customs which had rapidly changed in the preceding 15 years. While the Kennedy administration was pushing civil rights for African-Americans in the early Sixties, it is interesting to recall that when Byington was stationed at AFHQ in Caserta in the immediate post-war period, African-American and white U.S. Army soldiers were segregated at the royal palace's reflecting pool.<sup>904</sup>

As noted by Lehfeldt, since Byington did not often directly supervise consular work, he had ample time to entertain the local aristocracy and Italian and American military authorities. Some of these relationships dated back to his time in Rome from 1947-1950 and even earlier to his previous assignment to Naples from 1934 to 1939. Therefore, it is certain that Byington had heavily adopted the local culture and a quick review of his guests indicates that in the field of social representation he spoke Italian a significant portion of the time. Indeed, he had become overly familiar with the local social regime. It must be remembered that one of the goals of the 1924 Rogers Act was to rotate career officers so that they would not become captive to the manners of the host nation's diplomatic and court society. In the case of Byington, these guidelines were not followed. The Foreign Service did not have many officers who spoke Italian and knowledge of the language was crucial because the majority of the Italian politicians and officials did not speak English. Theodore Russell, a Foreign Service officer assigned to Naples from 1965 to 1967 noted that Byington

had I thought, very heavily focused relations with the upper crust of Neapolitan society. The counts and countesses and those folks. On the other hand he got around a lot. He was interested in what went on politically. However, I think that the Department of State and Embassy Rome were not sitting around on pins and needles waiting to have the latest political report from Naples. So, it didn't really make a great deal

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<sup>903</sup> See: H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, footnote, p. 94.

<sup>904</sup> See: ADST interview Thomas W. Fina with Charles Stuart Kennedy, May 21, 1992.

of difference with whom he was talking as long as the Consulate General ran smoothly.<sup>905</sup>

Political reporting from Naples in this period remains a question mark.<sup>906</sup> It is interesting to note that in the 1960s Byington created biographical profiles of Neapolitan political leaders of the democratic parties which were unearthed by the journalist Gianni Cipriani, a legal adviser to the parliamentary “Slaughter Commission” which investigated neofascist bombings in Italy in the Years of Lead.<sup>907</sup> Absent in the documentation, however, were reports on the far right. In this way Byington continued his political reporting approach from his time at the embassy (1947-1950). The question remains as to whether or not reports were written on neofascist elements and the fate of such reports if they exist. While political reports from Naples were not of great interest to the embassy, the consulate general was an important power center bolstered by the presence of the U.S. Navy’s Sixth Fleet from 1967 onward. In fact, Daniel Horowitz who replaced Byington in 1973 commented: “The job I really wanted was that of Consul General in Naples. I regarded that assignment as more important than the ambassador jobs that were likely to be offered.”<sup>908</sup>

While Byington was on home leave, his Italian and American interlocutors continued to meet as evidenced by an article in *Il Mattino* on February 2, 1965, which summarized a lunch offered at the Excelsior Hotel in Naples by General Francesco Sforza in honor of the Chief of

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<sup>905</sup> ADST interview, Theodore Russell with Charles Stuart Kennedy, February 22, 2000.

<sup>906</sup> On August 20, 2016, the author of this thesis submitted a Freedom of Information request at NARA (College Park) for access to the political reports of the Naples Consulate General for the years 1964-1965. As of the completion of this thesis, the request is still being processed.

<sup>907</sup> See: G.M. Bellu, “Anni ’60, spiati dagli USA”, *La Repubblica*, December 28, 2000, <http://ricerca.repubblica.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/2000/12/28/anni-60-spiati-dagli-usa.html>, Accessed March 1, 2016.

<sup>908</sup> ADST interview, Daniel L. Horowitz with Herbert E. Weiner, May 27, 1994.

Staff of the Air Force, General Aldo Remondino.<sup>909</sup> As noted by the historian Mimmo Franzinelli, Remondino was one of the select military authorities outside of the *carabinieri* involved in plotting the Piano Solo in July 1964.<sup>910</sup> Guests at the lunch included General Duilio Fanali who, like Remondino and Prince Caracciolo, had served in the *Aviazione legionaria* (Fascist Air Force) in the Spanish Civil War.<sup>911</sup> Fanali was closely tied to Defense Minister Andreotti whom Byington had known since since 1947.<sup>912</sup> Also present was General Ercole Savi who had investigated the death of Enrico Mattei in October 1962. Another guest was the American Admiral James Russell: Commander-in-Chief of Allied Forces Southern Europe from 1962 to 1965 and a close friend of Byington.<sup>913</sup> In 1966, due to the high expense of maintaining his home in Posillipo, Byington decided to transform the top floor of the consulate building into his own private apartment. This was made possible by the decreased office space requirements as a result of reduced emigration from the Mezzogiorno to the United States.

In 1968, Byington turned 60 and began to think about retirement. Although he would have liked to remain in Naples or perhaps in Florence, the increasing political instability in Italy stemming from the student protest movement and the Vietnam War made the threat of an

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<sup>909</sup> *Il Mattino*, February 2, 1965, In honor of the General Aldo Remondino, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the lunch yesterday evening was held at the Excelsior by General Francesco Sforza: other guests were the Prefect of Naples and the signora Licia Bilancia, the Admiral James Russell, the Admiral Ernesto and Countess Anna Maria de'Pellegrini Dai Coi, the General Umberto Fiori, the General Luigi and the signora Ilde Bianchi, the General of the Army Corps Antonio and the signora Ida Scaramuzza de Marco, the General and Mrs. Benjamin Webster, the General Ercole and the signora Savi, the General Cesare and the signora Lea de Porto, the General Duilio and the signora Carmen Fanali, General Elvin e Mrs. Ligon, and General Mario e Lisa Alessi, etc.

<sup>910</sup> See: M. Franzinelli, *Il "Piano Solo": i servizi segreti, il centro-sinistra e il "golpe" del 1964*, Milan, Mondadori, 2014, p. 124. Remondino was born in 1908 in Cuneo. He adhered to the Republic of Salò from 1943 to 1945, but betrayed intelligence to the Badoglio Government before entering the Republic of Italy's Air Force in 1946

<sup>911</sup> Fanali had been vice-commander of the Allied Air Forces of Southern Europe from 1961 to 1963. Caracciolo-Carafa lived in Via Riviera di Chiaia, in close proximity to the U.S. Consulate General.

<sup>912</sup> G. Formigoni, *Storia d'Italia nella guerra fredda: (1943-1978)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2016, p. 362.

<sup>913</sup> Russell accompanied President Kennedy on his visit to Allied Force Headquarters in Bagnoli on July 2, 1963.

eventual communist takeover seem more likely, especially in light of the events in Prague and the electoral gains made by the PCI in the elections of May 19.<sup>914</sup> One of the consulate general's missions in 1968 was to contrast negative publicity from the events in Vietnam and Byington was struck by the inability of the center-left governments of Moro and Leone to maintain public order. At the time, President Johnson's newly appointed ambassador to Rome, the economist H. Gardner Ackley, did not speak Italian and served as a figurehead of American representation similar to many of his successors in the following decades. To a long-term expert like Byington this state of affairs furthered the impression that the political situation in Italy was out of control while the embassy was being managed by amateurs.<sup>915</sup>

In Byington's eyes the international developments mirrored a negative trend in the State Department in Washington which continued to support the center-left government. Furthermore, he was dismayed by the perceived lack of quality of new recruits to the Foreign Service which had been initiated by the Wriston program from 1954 to 1958. The fact that hundreds of new recruits entered the service through direct lateral entry instead of through a competitive entrance examination rankled the old guard which held onto the image of an elite corps. Partially due to the difference in age with his subordinates, Byington continued to spend most of his time with Italians. Close friends in this period were Marchese Emilio and Mary Avati di Pago who lived in Riviera di Chiaia and were active in NATO circles; on June 29, 1968, they met with various admirals at the Villa Nike: home of the Supreme Commander of NATO South.<sup>916</sup> Byington was also well-connected with important local civic and military authorities such as Prefect Francesco Bilancia, the Police Supervisor Raffaele Alianello as well Generals Alberto Mosca, Giovanni Di Gennaro and Admirals Raffaele Barbera and Ernesto De Pellegrini Dai Coi.

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<sup>914</sup> Ibid., p. 97. Furthermore, he wanted to keep his servants, he had never lived as an adult without them and he knew that in the event of a communist overthrow of the government, as an American in Italy with this lifestyle would not have been looked at favorably.

<sup>915</sup> Byington's friend, the retired diplomat Robert Murphy visited Rome in November 1969 (just two weeks after Martin had become ambassador). Murphy noted that Martin had much work to do to properly reorganize the embassy after Ackley's ineffective tenure. See: Kissinger to Martin, January 22, 1970, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969-1972.

<sup>916</sup> *Roma*, June 29, 1968, p. 9.

## The Borghese Coup Attempt

In the late 1960s, the retired ambassador James Dunn lived in Rome where he remained in contact with the Italian diplomat Guerino Roberti. In 1968, Roberti's nephew, Hugh Fenwick (1937-2002), became chairman of the American Republican party in Italy.<sup>917</sup> As part of his political efforts Fenwick conducted a propaganda campaign in local newspapers in Calabria and Sicily and invited the former Governor of Connecticut John Lodge to Italy.<sup>918</sup> Calabria was part of the Naples consular district managed by Consul General Byington who throughout the 1960s had remained in close contact with his fellow Connecticut Republican Lodge who had been his superior in Madrid. Byington's long-time friend and colleague Outerbridge Horsey had been transferred to the U.S. Consulate in Palermo in January 1968.<sup>919</sup> With Richard Nixon's election in November, Consul General Byington hoped to receive another ambassadorship and he asked John Lodge to speak on his behalf to the new administration.<sup>920</sup> Lodge became Nixon's ambassador to Argentina and invited Byington to join him again as embassy counselor but the latter was leery of the politically volatile situation and chose to

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<sup>917</sup> Dunn and Roberti had known each other for over 30 years after having met in the pre-World War II diplomatic society in Washington D.C. See: "British Envoy is Host: He and Lady Lindsay Have Dinner for Lady Cubitt", *New York Times*, November 15, 1935, p. 26. Roberti had also served at the Italian Embassy in London. Dunn had been the State Department's Chief of Protocol in the 1930s, Roberti had served in the role in the Italian Foreign Office in the post World War II period and also as a delegate to the United Nations. In December 1968, the Dunns and Robertis entertained the English writer Sacheverell Sitwell and his wife Georgia at Palazzo Caetani, in Via delle Botteghe Oscure mere meters from the PCI and DC national headquarters, "Suzy Says", *Chicago Tribune*, December 9, 1968, Section 2-A, p. 1. Sitwell was an early supporter of Oswald Mosley's New Party in 1931. See: M. Worley, *Oswald Mosley and the New Party*, New York, Springer, 2010, p. 8.

<sup>918</sup> "Hugh Fenwick, 65, Former B'Ville Mayor" Obituary written by New Jersey Hills Media Group, March 20, 2002, [http://www.newjerseyhills.com/hugh-fenwick-former-b-ville-mayor/article\\_e6df8ba7-6cbd-5c3b-afe5-a13613fbe2b5.html](http://www.newjerseyhills.com/hugh-fenwick-former-b-ville-mayor/article_e6df8ba7-6cbd-5c3b-afe5-a13613fbe2b5.html). Accessed October 15, 2015. On Fenwick's propaganda activities see: C. Gatti, *Rimanga tra noi: L'America, L'Italia, la "questione comunista": i segreti di 50 anni di storia* Milan, Leonardo, 1990, p. 97.

<sup>919</sup> Byington was Consul General in Naples from August 1962 until February 1973.

<sup>920</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 74. It is likely that Byington first met Nixon in 1947 when the latter came to Rome on a junket regarding the Marshall Plan. They likely renewed their acquaintanceship in the period of 1950-1953 when Byington was Chief of WE in Washington.

<sup>921</sup> Ibid.

remain in Naples.<sup>921</sup> Lodge's brother, Henry Cabot Lodge, became Nixon's personal envoy to the Vatican in June 1970.

Elements of the Italian far right were regrouping in 1968 with the objective of replicating the military coup that had occurred in Greece in July 1967 or, alternatively, the installation of a strong presidential republic then symbolized by the figure of Charles De Gaulle in France. As noted by the historian Paolo Soave, far right activists Pino Rauti, Mario Merlino, and Stefano Delle Chiaie visited Greece in April 1968.<sup>922</sup> Similarly, on September 11, Junio Valerio Borghese founded the National Front (Fronte nazionale) movement with Benito Guadagni and Remo Orlandini. The group was supported by some Masonic elements and its first meeting, held in Rome on September 28, was attended by an estimated 40 activists.<sup>923</sup> On May 25, 1969, the embassy became aware that Borghese had established contact with a U.S. intelligence official in Naples and that the prince claimed to have "friends in influential places in Washington, including the State Department."<sup>924</sup> At this point, given Ambassador Dunn's activities in 1949, in all likelihood Byington had known the prince for 20 years. Finally, Borghese held a rally in Reggio Calabria on October 24.<sup>925</sup>

In late February 1969, a month after taking office, President Nixon embarked on a tour of Western Europe which included a stop in Rome. The new administration's objective was to demonstrate to Western Europeans that the American commitment to NATO remained firm despite the pressing issue of the war in Vietnam. Nixon and National Security Advisor Kissinger sought to reinforce their allies in order to present a strong united front ahead of

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<sup>922</sup> P. Soave, *La Democrazia allo specchio: L'Italia e il regime militare ellenico (1967-1974)*, Catanzaro, Rubettino, 2014, p. 148.

<sup>923</sup> D. Conti, *L'anima nera della Repubblica: storia del MSI*, Bari, Laterza, 2013, p. 57.

<sup>924</sup> CIA Chief of Station to Chief of EUR, forward copy of memorandum dated August 6, 1970, [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO\\_0024.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO_0024.pdf) Accessed November 30, 2016. That Borghese had contacts in the State Department is confirmed by Adriano Monti who participated in the aborted *coup d'état* of December 1970. See: A. Monti, *Il "golpe Borghese": un golpe virtuale all'italiana*, Bologna, Lo Scarabeo, 2006, pp. 119-121.

<sup>925</sup> Reggio Calabria was identified by the CIA in February 1971 as home to the National Front's most active local group, Intelligence Summary from CIA Field Station, February 17, 1971, [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO\\_0036.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO_0036.pdf) Accessed December 3, 2016.

negotiations with the Soviet Union. From this perspective, Kissinger, like Consul General Byington in Naples, considered the opening to the left an historical failure because it did not weaken the PCI. Differently than President Johnson, the new administration was not convinced that social reforms passed by the Italian government were a crucial factor in reducing communist influence.

As noted by the historian Luigi Guarna, in contrast to the White House's judgment, the State Department's acceptance of the center-left formula continued under the new Secretary of State William Rogers.<sup>926</sup> The key career diplomat in Washington was Country Director for Italy Wells Stabler, a Harvard graduate born in Boston in 1919 who had previously served in Rome from 1953 to 1957.<sup>927</sup> Stabler had been favorable to the center-left experiment and was re-assigned to Rome in June 1969 as deputy chief of mission under Lyndon Johnson's ambassador Gardner Ackley.

In the spring of 1969, the career Foreign Service officer Douglas MacArthur II was under consideration by President Nixon to replace Ackley.<sup>928</sup> MacArthur, who had just concluded an ambassadorship in Vienna was an emblem of the Eastern Establishment and a close friend of Byington dating back to 1937. In the end, Nixon, who suffered from an inferiority complex regarding the socially polished establishment, chose another career officer, the courtly North Carolinian Graham Martin, whom he charged with reorienting the Italian political system to a center-right government majority.<sup>929</sup> As recalled by Deputy Chief of Mission Stabler:

Martin [...] had persuaded the powers that be that he was just the man to be the US Ambassador to Italy because he was tough as nails to bring

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<sup>926</sup> As noted by Guarna, Rogers wrote on January 22, 1970, that the the U.S. could accept either the center-left or centrist majority formula. See: L. Guarna, *Richard Nixon e i partiti politici italiani (1969-1972)*, Milan, Mondadori, 2015, p. 121.

<sup>927</sup> In this previous period, as second secretary he was responsible for establishing contacts with the Christian Democrat Party and formed a long-lasting friendship with Giulio Andreotti. He also had an audience with President of the Republic Giovanni Gronchi at the Quirinal Palace.

<sup>928</sup> See: ADST interview, Samuel R. Gammon III with Charles Stuart Kennedy, February 2, 1989.

<sup>929</sup> For detailed analysis of the Nixon administration's policy toward Italy from 1969 to 1972 see: L. Guarna, *Richard Nixon e i partiti politici italiani (1969-1972)*, Milan, Mondadori, 2015; L. Cominelli, *L'Italia sotto tutela: Stati Uniti, Europa e crisi italiana degli anni Settanta*, Florence, Le Monnier, 2014; U. Gentiloni Silveri, *L'Italia sospesa: la crisi degli anni Settanta vista da Washington*, Turin, Einaudi, 2009.

about a shift in Italian politics and put things back on the track of center/right and to remove the Socialist from their position of participation in the government. He was given the mandate by Nixon apparently to go to Rome and correct the situation.<sup>930</sup>

A former army colonel, Martin embraced hierarchical structures. He was a polarizing figure who developed a reputation as a master of power politics with a conspiratorial streak. Various embassy officers recall that Martin treated Secretary of State Rogers poorly on the latter's visits to Rome due to his knowledge that the real power in American foreign policy lay in the hands of Kissinger and Nixon. Immediately after arriving in Rome, Martin made it clear that he was the president's envoy in order to ensure that the American military authorities based in Naples did not act without his permission. He chose not to learn Italian and differed from his predecessors in that he sought to limit his social interaction with politicians and government ministers.

Upon Martin's arrival, Italy was in the midst of the so-called "hot autumn" which witnessed widespread strikes by factory laborers as a protest over socioeconomic conditions. At the same time anti-Americanism tied to the war in Vietnam was rampant in the universities. On November 11, neofascists launched paper-bombs in Piazza Matteotti in the center of Naples. Then, on December 12, Italy was shocked by the bombing of Piazza Fontana in Milan which killed 17 people and wounded 88 others.<sup>931</sup> At the time the prime minister of the center-left government was the Christian Democrat Mariano Rumor who proved incapable of managing the convulsing social tensions in the country. In short, Martin inherited a situation that seemed close to spiraling out of control. Concern in Washington was mounting as evidenced by a memorandum delivered by Kissinger to Nixon on October 1 which noted the

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<sup>930</sup> ADST interview, Wells Stabler with Charles Stuart Kennedy, February 28, 1991. The Sicilian Sindona acquired the Franklin National Bank of New York in 1972. The bank failed in 1974. He was identified as a member of the secret Propaganda Due Masonic lodge in 1981 and died mysteriously in an Italian prison in 1986.

<sup>931</sup> For a comprehensive reconstruction of the Piazza Fontana incident including the role played by the Italian secret service (SID) in its aftermath see: L. Cominelli, *L'Italia sotto tutela: Stati Uniti, Europa e crisi italiana degli anni Settanta*, Florence, Le Monnier, 2014, pp. 83-88.

possibility of the Italian Communist Party's entry into the government majority within the following two to three years.

Stemming partly from their disillusion with the Vietnam War under President Johnson and in line with past U.S. intervention in Latin America, particularly under the Eisenhower administration, elements of the Republican Party in 1969 openly refuted the idea of the universalist Wilsonian democratic model. An influential exponent of this outlook was the influential Republican Governor of New York Nelson Rockefeller who declared in a television interview on December 19 that the United States could not impose democracy on South and Central American countries which had to solve their own problems. Therefore, the U.S. government should increase economic and military aid to those countries even if this in effect propped up the military regimes in the area. Rockefeller's declaration is crucial in understanding the mindset of diplomats like Homer M. Byington Jr. in this moment; Rockefeller's approach to Latin countries was considered applicable to Italy. Still, on January 26, 1970, Prince Junio Valerio Borghese visited the embassy in Via Veneto but was received only by Second Secretary Charles Stout: an indication that his activities were not favored at the moment.<sup>932</sup>

Several months later, Mariano Rumor's government collapsed on July 6. Soon thereafter, the President of the Republic Giuseppe Saragat charged Giulio Andreotti with forming a new government majority which the latter was unable to do. Given the continued political instability and the failure of the pro-American Andreotti to form a government, it seems likely that the White House revived the possibility of a more active intervention in Italian political matters. On August 5, Hugh Fenwick reported to the embassy on his conversations with Prince Borghese's deputy Remo Orlandini regarding a possible *coup d'état* in the late August

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<sup>932</sup> At some point, the date is unknown, Ambassador Martin ordered the chief of the political section, Robert Barbour, to meet with the Secretary of MSI Giorgio Almirante who had long sought to establish contact with the embassy. See: ADST interview, Robert E. Barbour with Charles Stuart Kennedy, November 30, 1992.

holiday period.<sup>933</sup> The following day, the Christian Democrat Emilio Colombo formed a new government with the socialists (PSI), social democrats (PSDI), and republicans (PRI) in the majority. Therefore, at least temporarily, Martin had failed in his mission to remove the socialists from the majority. Still, in a telegram to National Security Advisor Kissinger the following day, the ambassador opposed Borghese's movement and demonstrated his conviction that any attempted coup would fail.<sup>934</sup> It was on the same day, August 6, that the CIA Chief of Station in Rome summarized Borghese's recent activities, including his contact with an unidentified U.S. intelligence official in Naples. Furthermore, an Italian Naval intelligence declared that Borghese's movement "had the respect and support of a wide range of Government officials and even politicians that begin with the right wing of the PSI and extend to the left wing of the MSI."<sup>935</sup> The identification of Borghese's support as extending from the Italian Socialist Party to the left wing of the MSI reflects the political allegiance of the men identified in 1981 as members of the secret Propaganda Due Masonic lodge with whom he was in contact.

According to a CIA report on August 31, 1970:

Borghese tells his friends that, during President Nixon's last visit to Italy, he met with members of the presidential entourage to whom he illustrated the gravity of the Italian situation, pointing out that a *coup d'état* could provide the only solution, and asked U.S. support. The U.S. politicians are alleged to have replied: "Get moving, and once you have taken over the country, we will support you." Borghese's friends

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<sup>933</sup>For report on Fenwick conversation with Orlandini see: [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO\\_0023.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO_0023.pdf), "According the Psychological Warfare branch of the U.S. Army in a report on January 13, 1944, Orlandini under the category of "Collaborationists in La Spezia" was described as "officer of black brigade and as having taken part in all mopping up operations and as being responsible for various killings." See: [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO\\_0025.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO_0025.pdf)

<sup>934</sup> See: Martin to Kissinger, August 7, 1970, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969-1972.

<sup>935</sup> CIA Chief of Station to Chief of EUR, forward copy of memorandum dated August 6, 1970, [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO\\_0024.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO_0024.pdf) Accessed November 30, 2016.

comment to this story is that the Americans did not take Borghese seriously and their reply was strictly a diplomatic one.”<sup>936</sup>

Nixon’s prior visit to Rome had occurred in February 1969. Borghese was acknowledged in several reports as a poor politician. He was, however, a respected figure for his military pedigree. According to Adriano Monti, who participated in the botched coup of December 1970, the CIA approved of Borghese’s initiative with the condition that Giulio Andreotti would become the head of the new military government.<sup>937</sup> Given Andreotti’s willingness to ally with Borghese’s dissident group within MSI in 1952 this is not an entirely surprising development, although it remains unclear if Andreotti was aware of his new potential role. Monti also writes that he was told by Orlandini that weapons used for training far right activists came from the NATO deposits in Naples and that elements of the high command in that city were eager to cooperate with Borghese’s organization.<sup>938</sup> This is an interesting development considered the social activities of Consul General Byington in this period focused on American and Italian military authorities. Of course, Byington had been stationed in Rome at the time the first stay-behind organization was created in 1949. At any rate, it is evident that the stable presence in Naples of politically active Italian Air Force and Navy brass constituted a fertile environment for plots against the Republic.

Shortly after the journalist Mauro De Mauro disappeared in Palermo on September 16, 1970, American troops were placed on high alert in Europe due to the Syrian intervention in the Palestinian-Jordanian crisis. With this backdrop and with strong elements of the U.S. Sixth Fleet positioned off the coast of Israel, President Nixon had an audience with Pope Paul VI at the Vatican on September 28. In Naples, in the early afternoon students protested Nixon’s arrival in front of the consulate general. The following day Nixon spoke at the Villa Rosebery: residence of President of the Republic Saragat and met with NATO’s Supreme Allied

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<sup>936</sup> Intelligence Summary from CIA Field Station, February 17, 1971 [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO\\_0036.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/BORGHESE%2C%20JUNIO%20VALERIO_0036.pdf) Accessed December 3, 2016.

<sup>937</sup> A. Monti, *Il “golpe Borghese”*: un golpe virtuale all’italiana, Bologna, Lo Scarabeo, 2006, p. 105.

<sup>938</sup> *Ibid.* p. 26.

Commander in Europe General Andrew Goodpaster, the Chief of Staff of the Italian armed forces General Enzo Marchesi and the Greek Chief of Defense Odysseus Angelis.<sup>939</sup> The same day Kissinger held a press conference at the Hotel Excelsior in Via Partenope. Finally, on September 30, the president spoke at the Allied Forces Southern Europe Headquarters building in Bagnoli and held a meeting with his Mediterranean ambassadors: Consul General Byington was not listed among those present.<sup>940</sup> Still, it seems likely that someone in Nixon's entourage would have met with Byington given his vicinity to elements of Borghese's group; newspaper archives document the consul general's presence in Naples in late September.

Martin returned to Washington D.C. in early October for consultations. A summary memorandum indicates that by this point he had discussed a political action program for Italy throughout the previous year, which he desired to administer personally. Still, the ambassador viewed the enactment of his proposal as unlikely due to the necessity of obtaining inter-agency approval from the State Department and the CIA.<sup>941</sup> According to the political officer Peter Bridges, shortly after Martin returned to Rome he received several cables from the U.S. Embassy in Chile regarding the socialist Salvatore Allende who had become president on October 24.<sup>942</sup> As a result, Martin became increasingly worried that Italy could suffer a similar fate. Contemporaneously, in Naples Byington followed the violent protests in Reggio Calabria tied to the naming of Catanzaro as the regional capital.

On December 4, the CIA station in Rome sent an eight page telegram, likely to the White House, which remains classified.<sup>943</sup> Three days later, on the night of December 7-8, Borghese's coup operation went into action. Armed activists of the neofascist National

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<sup>939</sup> Angelis had been an officer in the Greek Army at the time of the April 1967 *coup d'état*. He remained loyal to Georgios Papadopoulos throughout the Colonels' regime.

<sup>940</sup> "President Nixon's Daily Diary September 15-30, 1970", Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Virtual Library, <https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/PDD/1970/036%20September%2016-30%201970.pdf>, Accessed May 16, 2017.

<sup>941</sup> Memorandum from Hart to Karamessines, October 22, 1970, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Vol. XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969-1972.

<sup>942</sup> ADST interview, Peter S. Bridges with Charles Stuart Kennedy, October 23, 2003.

<sup>943</sup> Telegram from the Central Intelligence Agency, December 4, 1970, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Vol. XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969-1972.

Vanguard (Avanguardia Nazionale) and forest rangers descended on Rome. All of a sudden, however, Borghese received a telephone call which called off the *golpe*.<sup>944</sup> The plotters were successfully demobilized but the motivation and origin of the cancellation remain a mystery.<sup>945</sup> Present at the command center of the operation was Hugh Fenwick.<sup>946</sup>

Despite Martin's insistence that he was Nixon's man in Rome, Consul General Byington's activities were *de facto* outside of the embassy's purview. Deputy Chief of Mission Stabler recalled that there was minimal contact between the embassy and the Naples office, the latter of which he described as Byington's "fiefdom".<sup>947</sup> Over 60 schools were occupied by students in the province of Naples at the time of the aborted coup. Byington's location on the night of the aborted coup remains unknown. *Il Mattino* notes his presence in the Naples area on November 1 and 24, 1970, but he is not listed again in the newspaper until March 13 of the following year.<sup>948</sup> Then, after the news of Borghese's plot broke on March 17, the Byingtons were not mentioned in the Neapolitan daily for the entire month of April. By the time of Borghese's debacle, the consul general had lived roughly 22 total years in Italy including the previous eight in Naples. Still, due to the clandestine nature of these extra-parliamentary activities, it is not currently possible to ascertain the extent of Byington's involvement in the coup although his repeated vicinity to far right conspiracies indicates that he was not merely reporting to Washington. It can be stated with confidence that he played a general coordinating role between American and Italian military officials based in Naples. Active in the Naples at the time of the aborted coup was the U.S. Admiral Horacio Rivero, Commander of Allied forces in Southern Europe and a friend of President Nixon with whom Byington was in close

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<sup>944</sup> From the Sid report sent to the judiciary, 1974, in Archivio Commissione Stragi, cited in P. Cucchiarelli e A. Giannuli, *Lo Stato parallelo: L'Italia "oscura" nei documenti e nelle relazioni della Commissione Stragi*, Rome, Gamberetti Editrice, 1997, p. 256.

<sup>945</sup> In the plot orchestration Lucio Gelli of the Propaganda Due Masonic lodge was charged with kidnapping the President of the Republic Giuseppe Saragat. Like Prince Borghese, Gelli had joined the Salò Republic in 1943 and later was in contact with the Intelligence Corps of the U.S. Fifth Army.

<sup>946</sup> N. Tonietto, "Un colpo di stato mancato: Il golpe Borghese e l'eversione nera in Italia" *Diacronie, Studi di Storia Contemporanea*, N. 27, 3/2016, p. 13.

<sup>947</sup> Ibid.

<sup>948</sup> *Il Mattino*, November 2, 1970, p. 14 and November 25, 1970, p. 11. Italy officially recognized the People's Republic of China on November 6, 1970.

contact due to his official duties. In 1978, Luca Dainelli, a long time friend of Byington and fellow monarchist, claimed to have frequently hosted the CIA Chief of Station in Rome, Howard “Rocky” Stone, at his villa in Ischia from 1971 to 1975.<sup>949</sup>

As noted by the historian Lucrezia Cominelli, in a November 1970 meeting with Alexander Haig, Ambassador Martin asked to meet personally with Kissinger in the near future to discuss future American covert operations in Italy.<sup>950</sup> Then on December 21, Martin sent a long backchannel message to Kissinger in which he presented his ideas for the political action program that had been discussed the previous October and noting that the embassy had established “a relationship with the Italian military establishment of increasingly intimacy.”<sup>951</sup> These developments suggest that the ambassador remained unaware of the coup attempt which had transpired two weeks prior. Martin did not trust the CIA station chief Seymour Russell to keep him informed of political developments; it is important to note that Russell had worked in Italy as an army intelligence officer in the crucial period of 1943 to 1947 which coincided with Byington’s previous assignment in Naples, Caserta, and Rome.<sup>952</sup> Given this state of affairs, Martin decided to open communications with the restive Italian generals who had joined up with Borghese’s movement and ordered the embassy’s U.S. Army attaché James Clavio to meet with General Vito Miceli who had become the director of SID on October 18, 1970. Another contact of the ambassador was the Italo-American Pier Francesco Talenti, a close friend of Prince Junio Valerio Borghese, who served as an unofficial emissary to the White House through Kissinger’s assistant Alexander Haig Jr.<sup>953</sup> According to Deputy Chief of Mission Stabler, Martin also focused his attention on the banker Michele Sindona and the

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<sup>949</sup> See: Rome Embassy to State, March 17, 1978, document available due to research by Princeton research Allison J.B. Cheney and Available at: <http://www.princeton.edu/~achaney/capsule/doc/1978ROME05060>, Accessed June 4, 2017.

<sup>950</sup> L. Cominelli, *L'Italia sotto tutela : Stati Uniti, Europa e crisi italiana degli anni Settanta*, Florence, Le Monnier, 2014, p. 104.

<sup>951</sup> Martin to Kissinger, December 21, 1970, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Vol. XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969-1972.

<sup>952</sup> “Seymour Russell”, *Hartford Courant*, March 13, 2000, Obituary, [http://articles.courant.com/2000-03-13/news/0003130012\\_1\\_russell-s-accomplishments-bob-russell-jim-russell](http://articles.courant.com/2000-03-13/news/0003130012_1_russell-s-accomplishments-bob-russell-jim-russell) Accessed June 28, 2017.

<sup>953</sup> ADST interview, Wells Stabler with Charles Stuart Kennedy, February 28, 1991.

American Archbishop Paul Marcinkus who managed the Vatican's finances.<sup>954</sup> It is known that Martin did not relish the opportunity to establish ties with the Italian political class, but the fact the embassy's ties with Italian military circles were in the embryonic stage is telling, especially when considering the relationships between Byington and Italian military authorities at the highest level dating back to the 1940s. Regarding Borghese's aborted coup, Stabler recalled that "we were not involved to the best of my knowledge" and that Martin was furious when he discovered that Talenti had been dealing with the White House behind his back.<sup>955</sup>

On January 13, 1971, the *New York Times* ran Cy Sulzberger's "Foreign Affairs" which came to known as the "Spaghetti with Chili Sauce" article and was the result of the journalist's close consultation with American military officials and diplomats, almost assuredly including Byington. Sulzberger warned:

Italy is politically sick despite the efforts of President Saragat, Premier Colombo and Foreign Minister Moro to cure it. And NATO is desperately worried. The Italian Communist party has held together despite internal and external Marxist vicissitudes and is slowly inching toward seizure of power by elections just as the Communists working with Allende did.

Should Italy be legally taken over by a Communist-dominated government, there would be little NATO could do about it. Undoubtedly, like Corvalan, the Italian bosses would swiftly seek to make the process irreversible.

This would virtually destroy the alliance, undermine the Common Market and drastically alter the tenuous power balance in the Mediterranean where the Soviet fleet is steadily gaining strength and Soviet diplomacy is steadily winning advantages.

Thus NATO thinks of Italy when the word Chile is mentioned. Just as it was possible to see the gloomy shadow of coming events on the Andes,

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<sup>954</sup> Ibid.

<sup>955</sup> Ibid.

fuzzy outlines of a similar shadow seem to be slipping along the Apennines—not for tomorrow but for three or four years hence.<sup>956</sup>

On February 18, Prime Minister Colombo met with President Nixon in Washington D.C. The former noted the “horror stories” being printed in major newspapers about the possibility of an communist entry into the government majority, evidently referencing Sulzberger’s column.<sup>957</sup> Still, at least in the public record of the meetings between the two heads of government, there was no mention of a *coup d’état* neither past or future. The following day an intelligence cable arrived at the White House indicating that an unnamed MSI emissary had traveled to Greece to coordinate a military takeover in Italy along the lines of the Colonels’ regime.<sup>958</sup> The MSI exponent noted that his group, with the backing of army paratroopers, marines, *carabinieri*, and air force elements planned to bomb Communist party headquarters in various Italian cities in order to commence fighting in the streets with communists which would necessitate the intervention of the army, thus setting up a military regime. This planning two months after Borghese’s failed coup reinforces the tentative conclusion that the plot of December had the same end goal. The fact that such a small force was employed by Borghese in the attempt to overthrow the Republic lends further credence to the theory espoused by the magistrate Vitalone, namely that the plan involved setting off an anti-insurrection mechanism in the Italian armed forces, which once triggered, could be used to justify a military takeover of Rome. This reconstruction coincides with that of Adriano Monti in his 2016 memoir.

At this point, it is useful to reflect on the different channels of communication that existed between Italy and the United States beyond the official Martin-Kissinger line. In March 1971, the retired Foreign Service officer Robert D. Murphy sent a letter to Kissinger through NSC staff member Helmut Sonnenfeldt which envisioned the distinct possibility of a communist

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<sup>956</sup> C. Sulzberger, “Foreign Affairs”, *New York Times*, January 13, 1971, p. 39. Luis Corvalan was the general secretary of the Chilean Communist Party.

<sup>957</sup> The results of the meeting are chronicled in a memorandum of conversation dated February 18, 1971, available in Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Vol. XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969-1972.

<sup>958</sup> Intelligence Information Cable, February 19, 1971, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Vol. XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969-1972.

triumph in Italy due to the paralyzed political system. The information came from Murphy's "Italian friend" who, according to the historian Guido Formigoni, was probably the retired diplomat Luca Dainelli, a close friend of Byington.<sup>959</sup> All of Byington, Murphy, Dainelli, and Sulzberger had known each other since the 1940s. It seems unlikely that there were direct transatlantic communications between the Naples Consulate General and the White House in 1970. In addition to Admiral Rivero, Byington was likely in contact with the two chiefs of the CIA Station in Rome in this period: Seymour Russell and his successor Howard "Rocky" Stone. In reporting on the riots in Reggio Calabria, Byington utilized air-grams which traveled in the diplomatic pouch.<sup>960</sup>

Around the same time, on March 17, 1971, the Italian public learned of Borghese's botched effort of the previous December. The prince, however, had already fled to Spain to escape eventual prosecution and never returned to Italy. On April 2, Ambassador Martin wrote to Kissinger, observing that plans by Italian military authorities for a *coup d'état* were being accelerated due to the imminent retirement of the previously mentioned General Duilio Fanali - then serving as Chief of Staff of the Italian Air Force. (See Appendix J) The letter to Kissinger reveals that Martin was not favorable to what he considered the "half-baked" coup planning but it is fascinating that the ambassador did not feel informed on the situation by Kissinger who, as widely known, did not appreciate advice from career Foreign Service officers that contrasted his desired policy. On June 11, Nixon and Kissinger discussed the Martin's performance; while recognizing the ambassador's loyalty, both men agreed that it would benefit the administration to have a more energetic representative in Italy along the

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<sup>959</sup> R. Fornasier, *The Dove and the Eagle*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars, 2012, p. 98. Dainelli continued to function as a source of information to the Nixon White House; in August 1973, Kissinger wrote a letter to Robert Murphy regarding a report by Luca Dainelli on the Italian political situation. See: "HAK Chrons August 1973" <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/LOC-HAK-37-4-1-5.pdf> Accessed January 10, 2017.

<sup>960</sup> It must be remembered that Byington's sister worked on Italian and French affairs at the NSA in this period and communication via one-time padding was certainly possible.

<sup>961</sup> Nixon met with Baron Guido Zerilli-Marimò on June 11. The results of their conversation is available in Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Vol. XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969-1972.

lines of the role played by James Dunn twenty years prior.<sup>961</sup> They temporarily agreed to substitute Martin after the election of the President of the Republic the following December.

The conspirators who had not been arrested for a connection to the Borghese plot the previous December feared that the arrest of their co-conspirators might lead to their own incrimination. Fanali, who was close to Interior Minister Andreotti, received a warning that he was under investigation (*avviso di garanzia*) regarding the botched coup but was never brought to trial by the magistrate Claudio Vitalone who was also close to Andreotti and has been implicated in a series of judicial misadventures. Still, according to Remo Orlandini, Fanali's complicity was a key element that would have led to the uncontested occupation of the Defense Ministry by the plotters.<sup>962</sup> Given this evidence it must be deemed likely that Fanali played a central role in the plot whereas the names of other high military authorities were cancelled from the registrations of oral interviews produced by Antonio Labruna of SID.

In June 1971, the Italian Admiral Gino Birindelli, known for his outspoken right-wing political views, was expelled from Malta by the country's new labour Prime Minister, Dom Mintoff who considered the former a dangerous militarist.<sup>963</sup> In the following days the NATO spokesman in Naples refused to comment on Birindelli's whereabouts, noting only that the admiral was summoned to the city by Admiral Rivero and then disappeared somewhere in Italy.<sup>964</sup> Birindelli returned to public view in 1972 as the Commander of Allied Naval Forces in Naples and was one of 56 *missini* elected to the Chamber of Deputies that same year.

On December 29, 1971, the Christian Democrat Giovanni Leone was elected President of the Republic achieving the necessary number of votes through support from the MSI in

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<sup>962</sup> G. Flamini, *Il partito del golpe. Le strategie della tensione e del terrore dal primo centrosinistra organico al sequestro Moro, 1968-1970*, Ferrara, Bovolenta, 1982, p. 223. istry building on the night of the December 7-8 might be the reason the coup had been called off.

<sup>963</sup> "Nato, Maltese Dispute Widens" *Chicago Tribune*, June 28, 1971, p. 6. Birindelli had been named the Allied Commander of Southern Europe based in Malta on October 18, 1970, or less than two months prior to the aborted Borghese *coup d'état*.

<sup>964</sup> The NATO spokesman noted that it was the first time in his career that he was ordered to remain silent Birindelli had been the commander of the V Squadriglia MAS at the beginning of World War II.

addition to his own party. On February 18 of the following year Giulio Andreotti formed his first government which was composed exclusively of Christian Democrats. The government lasted only nine days and Leone decided to move the general election up to May 7. For the electoral campaign Ambassador Martin convinced the White House to give him personal control over clandestine funds directed to Italian politicians and government officials, a move opposed by the CIA.<sup>965</sup> The majority of the funds went to the Christian Democrats who revived the civic committees which had been so successful in 1948. Martin also gave \$800,000 to the SID Director Miceli with no conditions attached to their use.<sup>966</sup> The ambassador's motivation was evident in a cable to Kissinger's assistant Alexander Haig Jr. in which he stated "I just don't intend to have another Chile here."<sup>967</sup>

In order to return to a center-right formula, Martin encouraged the Christian Democrats to make social reforms commensurate with the rapid evolution of Italian society in the preceding decade. He also ordered his subordinates to encourage the party's leaders to weed out the more corrupt elements in their midst and to settle their differences in order to present a more cohesive unit and render the government more effective.<sup>968</sup> Andreotti returned as prime minister with a new government in June but perhaps the most significant result of the election was that the MSI, on a law and order campaign, gained 8.7% of the vote in the Chamber of Deputies, nearly doubling its consensus from 1968.

As noted by the historian Paul Ginsborg, the chief of the CIA station in Rome Howard 'Rocky' Stone reported after a December 1972 meeting with elements of the secret Gladio organization that due to widespread agitation among left-wing elements "there could occur an

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<sup>965</sup> American funding of the Christian Democrat party had concluded in 1968. The Nixon White House was well aware of the millions of dollars available to the PCI from the Soviet Union. Still, Nixon had initially agreed in March 1969 that funding of this kind should not be resumed as "it just becomes blackmail". See: Memorandum for the Record, March 11, 1969, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Vol. XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969-1972.

<sup>966</sup> Wells Stabler confirms in an oral interview that the funds were given to Miceli who was later convicted of facilitating the Borghese plot of 1970. The conviction was subsequently overturned. See: ADST interview, Wells Stabler with Charles Stuart Kennedy, February 28, 1991.

<sup>967</sup> Martin to Al Haig (White House), February 25, 1972, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/LOC-HAK-165-5-20-1.pdf> Accessed June 7, 2017.

<sup>968</sup> Ibid.

extraordinary insurrectionary situation in the South, as a result of which certain pockets of territory could in effect be controlled by forces contrary to the government.” Stone, who was close to Dainelli and consequently almost assuredly Byington, affirmed that the Gladio organization would have to respond to in the same manner as the CIA had operated in Vietnam.<sup>969</sup> Therefore, during the years of the strategy of tension, Gladio was to be used for internal measures.

In February 1973, after ten and a half years in Naples, Byington retired to the gated community of Sotogrande in San Roque, Spain. The State Department did not honor him in any way despite his long and decorated career but he was named *Grande Ufficiale Terza Classe* by the Italian government.<sup>970</sup> At the time Admiral Rivero was serving as U.S. Ambassador to Spain and Prince Borghese lived nearby in Cadiz. Roughly two years later, in January 1975, Jonathan Stoddart of the Department of Defense arrived in Naples as political advisor to the NATO commander of Allied Forces Southern Europe, the “congenial” and “very politically oriented” Admiral Means Johnston from Alabama who was a protégé of the U.S. Senator John Stennis.<sup>971</sup> Stoddart recalled:

When I arrived we had a first-rate consul general in Naples, Dan Horowitz. [...] But, one of the immediate problems that Dan alerted me to [...] was that there was a clear perception that senior NATO American staff, beginning at the top with Means and Hope Johnston, had been basically seized hostage socially, or co-opted, by some very unsavory Neapolitans. In effect, the dark, seamy side of Neapolitan “nobility,” the extreme right, if not fascist, were a gaggle of threadbare, dissolute counts, dukes, barons, and spouses. So, this was a very tricky situation. I had also been alerted to this before I left Washington, [...] and, it was true. The Johnstons would have a party and a good proportion of their guests were overt members of the MSI.<sup>972</sup>

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<sup>969</sup> P. Ginsborg, *L'Italia del tempo presente: Famiglia, società civile, Stato, 1980-1996*, Turin, Einaudi, 1998. p. 326.

<sup>970</sup> H. Byington, *The Sum of Perishable Things*, p. 100. After the aborted *coup d'état* of December 7-8, 1970, Prince Borghese had relocated to nearby Cádiz where he remained until his death on August 26, 1974. Cádiz was also close to the NATO facility at Rota, and from 1972 to 1974 Admiral Rivero was the U.S. Ambassador to Spain.

<sup>971</sup> ADST interview, Jonathan Stoddart with Charles Stuart Kennedy, January 19, 2000.

<sup>972</sup> Ibid.

Johnston retired in August 1975. The prevalence of the MSI in the social space inhabited by American military and diplomatic officials had historically been fostered by Byington. In addition to Admiral Birindelli, a major exponent of the MSI in the Naples area was the lawyer Giovanni Roberti who was first elected to the Chamber of Deputies in 1948 where he remained uninterruptedly until 1979.

### **The Lockheed Scandal**

The Neapolitan Ovidio Lefebvre D'Ovidio was a descendant of a prominent family, partially of French origin, which operated paper mills in the Liri Valley. In 1970, he acted as an intermediate between the Lockheed Corporation and the Italian Air Force regarding the purchase of the Hercules C-130 transport. In order to assure that the Italian government purchased the aircraft, Lockheed bribed officials such as the Chief of Staff of the Air Force General Duilio Fanali and Defense Minister Mario Tanassi. Lefebvre's brother Antonio, who was closely connected to high-ranking politicians such as Giovanni Leone and former diplomats Luca Dainelli and Girolamo Messeri who was then a senator. To facilitate negotiations Antonio Lefebvre held a lunch with Messeri and Roger Bixby Smith of Lockheed.

The bribery scandal erupted in 1976 as a result of an investigation by the Church Committee of the U.S. Senate which revealed two code names for the Italian officials responsible. One of the code names, "pun", came to be identified as General Fanali who was convicted for corruption in 1979 by the Italian Constitutional Court, whereas the other, "antelope cobbler", referred to an unnamed Italian prime minister, presumed to be Giovanni Leone considering that "cobbler" could easily have been "gobbler" and Leone means "lion" in Italian. In 1978, the retired Dainelli testified before the Constitutional Court that "antelope cobbler" was really the President of the Christian Democrat party Aldo Moro who had been prime minister from February to June 1968. The Italian public learned of this news on March 14-15, 1978, in *Corriere della Sera*. On March 16, Moro was kidnapped leading to a 55 day odyssey that

concluded with his assassination in May. President of the Republican Leone resigned from office on June 15 largely due to the fallout from the Lockheed scandal.

Through Dainelli, Byington would certainly have long been acquainted with the Lefèbvre brothers. As previously noted, General Fanali was a part of Byington's social circle. According to *L'Unità*, Fanali bought a tower at the locality of Scauri in the town of Minturno in 1968 from Prince Caracciolo.<sup>973</sup> Given these factors, and the official role of consulates in facilitating commerce, it is difficult to conceive that Byington would have been unaware of the nature of the Lockheed contracts especially since he had been close to Italian military officials since the 1930s.

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<sup>973</sup> P. Gambescia, "Il generale Fanali e Antoini Lefebvre arrestati per le bustarelle Lockheed", *L'Unità*, March 23, 1976, p. 5.

## Conclusion

The majority of American Foreign Service officers in Italy remained generally favorable or neutral to Mussolini's regime until the autumn of 1937. In Rome, a change in the wind was clearly perceived by February of the following year when the *Duce* stopped receiving Ambassador Phillips. By this point anticommunism was no longer sufficient to bridge the gap between the American diplomats and the aggressive foreign policy of the totalitarian regimes. Contemporaneously, the House of Savoy, which had long enjoyed friendly relations with the United Kingdom and the United States, was openly hostile to Mussolini's deepening ties with Nazi Germany which were on full display in Naples in May 1938. Homer M. Byington Jr., the U.S. Consul in Naples who was just about to turn 30 years old, was closely tied to the Neapolitan aristocracy and in the orbit of Princess Maria José, who, according to a British Foreign Office document plotted a *coup d'état* against Mussolini to take place in September 1938. Due to the high stakes and secretive nature of this development it is unclear how often the Byingtons met with the future queen and Prince Umberto. Likewise, a possible role played by the major commercial interests in Naples as represented by Baron Luigi Gallotti, the Signorini family, and Prince Caracciolo remains a mystery.

Skipping ahead to the immediate post-war period, in the autumn of 1945 it seems likely that Byington maneuvered behind the scenes in Naples to help provoke the crisis of the Parri government. Cooperation with freemason elements and large landowners in this endeavor would not be surprising. At the time of the institutional referendum of June 1946, anti-communism and support for the House of Savoy comprised the central tenets of Byington's relationships with aristocratic interlocutors such as Alessandro (Sandrino) Contini Bonacossi and Prince Caracciolo, the latter of whom co-directed a reactionary movement against the newborn Republic. In 1948, Byington championed the interests of the *latifondisti* against agricultural reform. It is possible that he was joined in this endeavor by Prince Junio Valerio Borghese who was in contact with Ambassador Dunn from February 1949 onward. It seems plausible that Borghese became a long-term trusted anti-communist Cold War proxy although

Byington never indicated any relationship with far right elements in his reports from the embassy.

A key turning point in Byington's career was the election of John F. Kennedy in November 1960. Instead of receiving another ambassadorship, he was sidelined for well over a year in Washington. Soon after his return to Naples in August 1962, he set to work against the center-left formula desired by the Kennedy administration. In this decade long assignment he became captive to the local social regime partly due to the absence of American colleagues of his own age. While he sympathized with his conservative Italian friends, he was generally more sober in his analysis of the communist threat. At any rate it is clear that in addition to his official diplomatic duties, he played an unofficial parallel role based on private initiative. He certainly knew of and was likely involved in the Borghese plot of December 1970 although it is difficult to identify the exact nature of his activity, namely whether or not he was merely an external reference point of the plotters.

For several reasons Byington and his long-time colleague Outerbridge Horsey remain relatively unknown to historians despite the vast scope of studies on the relations between the United States and Italy during the Cold War: the former's relationships were often focused on military and aristocratic elements instead of politicians while the latter was closer to the Vatican orbit; second, both men rarely corresponded with colleagues; third, they were cautious and discreet in their diplomatic activities; fourth, Byington was close to Masonic activities of which there is no public written record; lastly any reference to the two diplomats in documents tied to the Borghese plot was likely eliminated by the Italian military's secret service (SID), the directors of which were identified as members of the Propaganda Due Masonic Lodge and closely collaborated with the CIA. Still, Byington and Horsey's careers constitute a fascinating case of transnational history and ideology: they understood Italy better than the country whose values and way of life their professional activity was meant to represent. Although many Foreign Service officers served on more than one occasion in Italy, the remarkable combined length of their tours of duty are exceptional, especially since they had no liberal-democratic Wilsonian counterpart in their professional cohort. In some way their vision of the world was passed on to their younger long-time colleague William Knight who

became influential as the officer responsible for the Italian desk, never returned for another assignment in Italy.

American influence in Western Europe in the post-World War II period has been described by Geil Lundestag as “empire by invitation” and Charles Maier as “consensual hegemony” with regard to the reduced autonomy of European national governments under the NATO nuclear umbrella. Certainly the initiatives taken by Byington and Horsey are indicative of the dominant American role in the Atlantic alliance but the theme which reemerges most often is that of a close collaboration between American Foreign Service officers and their Italian interlocutors both inside and outside of the public sphere in a mutual struggle against communism. In the case of Byington, who returned to Naples in 1962, it is evident that his immense network of contacts in aristocratic and military circles served as an external pressure group, with Giulio Andreotti and possibly Giovanni Leone as points of reference inside the government majority, which served to influence the same government regarding its ideological composition. In his relationships with American officials, Andreotti appears as a trusted manager of the collateral effects of policies drawn up in Washington and executed by Foreign Service officers and CIA operatives both of whom, at times, also acted on their own initiative. It is perhaps best to perceive these relationships as composing one power group among many jockeying for position in Italian affairs. Still, with the exception of a few cases, such as the role played by Horsey in obstructing the center-left, the influence of the career diplomat was not decisive. A clear example of the junior partner’s autonomy is demonstrated by De Gasperi’s refusal in 1952 to countenance a second institutional referendum and to incorporate the monarchists into the government majority. Consequently, the exact weight of American influence in internal Italian affairs via diplomatic representation must be calculated on a case by case basis.

From 1946 to the early 1970s, extra-parliamentary elements of the far right initiated contact, first with the Allies, then with the embassy, in search of approval for their objective of eliminating the Italian Communist Party from the political system. Still, the far right never obtained what it wanted from the embassy and the majority of the efforts in which Byington’s interlocutors participated did not achieve their objectives. It is important to remember that

after 1947, the threat of a communist *coup d'état* became more remote and the party sought to win legitimacy through electoral results instead of waging a militant campaign to wrest control of the government from the Christian Democrats. Secondly, American endorsement of a far right military coup was a last resort option; the United States had invested billions of dollars in reconstructing Europe along democratic lines and policy makers in Washington, largely of a liberal democratic nature, were generally satisfied with hegemonic status in the Mediterranean. Furthermore, planners would have been forced to think of the long-term consequences of a successful reactionary coup; perhaps the military junta would take a nationalistic turn, placing American military bases and NATO in jeopardy. In the event that the military junta was eventually overthrown, the incoming government would hardly be sympathetic to a hegemonic power that had worked to install its predecessor. The Italian hands were often frustrated but lived by a code of self-denial along the lines of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's idea that "the exercise of power implied the responsibility to accept the limits of self-restraint."<sup>974</sup> The exception to this seems to be the Borghese plot of 1970 which while opposed by the embassy, appears to have received approval from the CIA as stated by Adriano Monti, and *ipso facto* from the White House. Given this state of affairs it appears likely that Consul General Byington in Naples, who was close to elements involved in the plot, was following orders from Washington D.C.

Due to a lack of documentation it remains unknown which Italian statesmen in addition to De Gasperi, Andreotti, Scelba, and Saragat were aware of the influential networks established by Byington and Horsey. For example, in the case of Byington, who had met Aldo Moro in Rome at social functions in the period of 1947 to 1950, it seems plausible that the latter's famous "rattling of sabres" quip regarding the Piano Solo of 1964 while certainly making reference to the far right, might also have been an allusion to the role played by American diplomatic representation.

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<sup>974</sup> G. R. Berridge, M. Keens-Soper, T.G. Otte, *Diplomatic Theory from Machiavelli to Kissinger*, New York, Palgrave, 2001, p. 190.

## Appendix

### A. Gilbridge Meldrum Counter-intelligence Report, July 20, 1945.

Il Paese, the new daily Naples paper which appeared last month, still claims to be independent. The director, Amedeo PISTOLESE, says that it backs no party and that the funds for publishing the paper were furnished by several friends who had the same political ideas. At the same time he denied having any definite political ideas.

It is difficult to see how PISTOLESE can claim to publish an independent newspaper when at the same time he is head of the Democratic Party in Naples. However, it is true that the small Democratic Party has no political program beyond backing the House of Savoy and claiming Nitti as their spiritual leader.

So far, PISTOLESE has not openly backed the monarchy in his newspaper, except for one small exception. On 6 July there was an article which opened, "It is time to uncover the guns, we are monarchists and say so openly. We know the king has faults but they can still be defended, even his relationship with Germany will be judged by history. In the king's time we were happy, and the common people did not think of usurping the government. The people had bread. Our place in the Mediterranean was unchallenged. That is why we are openly monarchists and we say long live the king. PISTOLESE denied that this article intended to support the monarchy. He claims that it was written with the intent to poke fun at the king and that the writer simply failed in his attempt to create that impression. A more logical explanation of the above article was that PISTOLESE authorized the above article as a sort of trial balloon to see what popular reception it would get. Since no more articles of this type have appeared, it can be assumed that the article did not get the desired reception. And that is why PISTOLESE is now concentrating on publicizing NITTI.

Il Paese has been printing almost daily stories about NITTI exaggerating the man's actual importance. When NITTI doesn't do or say anything that can be printed, Il Paese gives a description of the welcome which PISTOLESE is preparing for him in Naples. On 11 July there was a large front page spread complete with picture of the former politician stating that he was returning to Italy to "take his place in the national life." So far, PISTOLESE can remain independent and still back NITTI, since NITTI has refused to take a stand on anything as yet,

claiming that at his age he must take time to contact his friends and not act on first impressions.

At the present time PISTOLESE denies backing the monarchy and says he is waiting for NITTI to give him orders on what line to take. He admits strong free-mason connections between NITTI and himself and many other important people. He is hoping that NITTI will be able to arrange a fusion of the more important conservative groups. The only stand he would take is stating that he is most probably against communism.

Pistolese himself is a well-known Naples criminal lawyer. Recently he has handled the defense of several accused fascists. [...]

Pistolese is doing a good job of organizing a strong conservative political force which he will throw into the Italian political scene when the time is ripe. He has the sympathy if not the active support of Neapolitan big business which was compromised by fascism. Many of his contacts outside of this area seem to be through Free Mason channels, specifically the Bencivenga - Labriola - Spasiano group for Southern Italy and Sicily and the Scervini group for Rome.

The direction of Il Paese is left almost entirely to the former fascist journalist Ernesto Grassi. He has also done an excellent job on the newspaper which has cut deeply into the publications of La Voce and Il Domani d'Italia.

PISTOLESE stated to this officer that an American named CHINIGO director of the International News Service, was president of Il Paese, and that therefore Il Paese was practically an American paper. He added that International News Service had helped the newspaper in many ways.

Il Paese supports no party at present but continues to criticize everyone, even including the Allies. However, Communism comes in for the most severe criticism and the paper has recently printed a series of front page feature articles [...] which profess to tell the truth about Russia in the best tabloid style.<sup>975</sup>

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<sup>975</sup> Monthly Counterintelligence Report of July 20, 1945 by Gilbert Meldrum, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1936-1964, Box 142. The Prince Valerio Pignatelli who directed neo-fascist activity in Calabria and Campania in 1945 had worked as a correspondent for William Randolph Hearst's *Universal Service* in the 1920s.

**B. Report from Allied Force Headquarters Caserta, June 1946.**

1. On 14 May 1946 a certain Contini made overtures to an informer of this office stating that he was in contact with certain revolutionary elements of the right-wing who wished to speak with a member of the Allied Intelligence. The informer of this office is a member of the CC:RR and a known monarchist. He stated that the movement seemed to be backed by serious elements and that it would be profitable to hear them out.

2. On 14 May CONTINI, together with our informer was interviewed. CONTINI went into a long story how the left-wing had made arrangements to take over the country by force of arms and that his group of friends, knowing that the Allies were not prepared to suppress left-wing elements, had for several months built up a great clandestine resistance movement with ramifications throughout North Italy. He stated that the movement had the backing of the Vatican and at the same time intimated that he was a trusted functionary at the Holy See. He indicated that the objective of the group was to take over the Government by surprise and rule the country until the left-wing danger had passed. His group, however, prior to taking any action desired the assurances of the American and British Embassies that they would maintain an attitude of strict neutrality.” [...]

3. CONTINI was informed that it was not within our power to consider his proposals but that it was our personal belief that any attempt at a coup in view of the legal powers invested in the Government and approved by the AC, would result in a hostile reaction on the part of the Allies. [...]

4. CONTINI stated that he felt it wise to speak further with one of the prime-movers of the group and so it was therefore agreed that on the following morning a meeting would be held with the addition of this new member.

5. The new arrival (at the next meeting) introduced himself as Edoardo COSTA. He immediately launched into a long and tedious argument outlining the growth and rise of the left-wing powers under an ignorant and disinterested Allied Commission. [...] in view of this threat to the future of the country, he and his friends had for several months laid down a vast network of right-wing elements who were ready at a moment's notice to take over the Government. [...] He further stated that he was a convinced monarchist. [...] He intimated that they planned to take prisoner DE GASPERI and other members of the Government, forcing them to legalize the coup. He further stated that all

cell-leaders and political figureheads of the left would be disposed of immediately. [...]

6. In reply, the same arguments were put to COSTA as were given the day previous to CONTINI. He was informed that the King, from personal statements was against all revolutionary elements and that our information indicated that the Vatican likewise shared this point of view. [...]

9. We indicated that COSTA was the same member of the UQ who had sent an agent to Spain to contact fascist elements [...]

12. On 31 May, following the undersign's return from abroad, Mr. BENTON stated that the British Ambassador had taken mild action with DE GASPERI on the matter and that COSTA had been arrested. [...]

15. During the middle of our conversations with COSTA we were fully aware that he represents a most dangerous element and is no doubt quite serious in his plans to attempt some sort of nationwide coup. [...]

17. It is our belief that COSTA having seen a great number of right-wingers (Army, Navy, CC:RR, Vatican, UQ, fascists and dissident masons) discovered that a coup would be possible if he should obtain the tacit approval of the Allies.

18. The British were impressed with the realistic approach of COSTA and with his sincerity. It is our feeling that he is swayed with a feeling of fanaticism and is 100% fascist. For this reason we are convinced that he is a direct danger to the formation of a Republic without bloodshed.<sup>976</sup>

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<sup>976</sup> Military Intelligence Report "The Edoardo COSTA Affair" undated (June 1946), NARA RG 84, U.S Embassy Rome Classified General Records 1946-1964, Box 5.

**C. Frederick Jandrey, American Consul in Naples to Rome, June 10, 1946.**

Prince Gianni Caracciolo-Carafa (34-35 years of age) is one of the many Caracciolo families in Naples but is also one of the few who can rightfully use the title of Prince. I first met him in 1939 at which time I recall he had returned from the war in Spain. He was an Air Force officer in the Italian Air Force and as I recall claimed to have fought in Spain because of his opposition to Communism. I have seen Caracciolo on a number of occasions since returning after the war and as far as I can recall he mentioned having served not only with the Italian Air Force against the Allies but also to have flown for a time as a part of an Italian unit fighting with the Allied Air Forces.

Prince Caracciolo is an owner of agricultural property in the Puglie and in the Minturno area. Several months ago he was very concerned over the Communist tendencies of his tenants and made a few trips to Rome in order to discuss the agriculture problem with the Italian Government ministers there. When he returned he said that nothing could be done with them since they were Communists. At the same time he began seeking other sources of investment because of his fear that Communistic leadership might prevail in Italy.

Last Saturday noon I had lunch at his home and on arrival his wife explained that for the past two days Gianni had been very much occupied with the political situation and that he had been up night and day discussing the situation with Monarchist leaders. At one point a telegram was delivered and the Princess Caracciolo ordered her servant to take it immediately to her husband who was at the time supposedly in a conference in his office. The Prince left the house immediately and sent word that he would try to return in about an hour's time. The Princess added that her husband was attempting to moderate the desires of the Monarchist group to cause violent disorder. She painted him as a moderating influence. At the same time, undoubtedly reflecting his opinion, she discussed the old story of how unsatisfactory the alliance of southern Italy and northern Italy had been. She could see no reason why southern Italy could not assume some form of semi-autonomy status similar to that desired by the Separatists in Sicily.

About an hour and a half later Prince Caracciolo returned and immediately stated to me that these were terrible times for which your country is responsible. He alleged that there were scandalous irregularities in the recent election and that many people who would have voted Monarchist had been prevented from doing so because the election authorities were Communists. (This is an indication of the irrational attitude of Prince Caracciolo since the vote in southern Italy was so overwhelmingly Monarchist). During the course of the

conversation he also said that the people on the street were attributing the republican success to the desire on the part of the British to have Soviet Russia influence policy in Italy (this propaganda would seem to have been promoted by the Monarchist groups in order to stir up popular anti-British feeling). When I suggested that the Monarchist group lacked a leader and perhaps the armament necessary for a successful reactionary coup in southern Italy, Cariacciolo (SIC) answered that this was not the time to attempt to fight but rather the time to prepare for the return of the King which he believed would take place within a year.

Cariacciolo (SIC) is a somewhat hotheaded individual and shares with others of his class both a fear and hatred of leftist groups, particularly Communists. His night and day activities at the present time certainly indicate a close connection with the Monarchist group but I would not attribute to him sufficient organizing ability and real intelligence to direct such a movement.

**D. Naples Consul Flournoy to Chargé d’Affaires Key, June 20, 1946.**

The city was quite calm for several days following the elections until the trend of the unofficial returns began to become evident. The Monarchist elements, who were very disappointed, began to show unrest about June 6th or 7th, and rumors of Separatist movements were widespread. Both the Questura and the CIC evidenced genuine concern over the situation when consulted on June 7th, after a night of rather serious incidents including several attacks by the Monarchists on barracks of the Army and the Carabinieri. All the police forces and the Carabinieri were out in full force with armored cars and riot cars. There were rumors that Monarchist elements from Sicily and Catanzaro were marching on Naples. [...]

On June 7th two members of the staff followed on these Monarchist groups which proceeded to the City Hall, Prefecture, and Italian Navy Headquarters. Their activities were more or less limited to attempting to get the flag with the Savoy arms raised at all these buildings. Another demonstration was witnessed around 7 o’clock in the evening at the Mercato Questura which is on the Corso Umberto. Here the crowd whose mood was uglier was demanding that the flag with the Savoy emblem be raised. The Reparto Celere appeared on the scene to the displeasure of the demonstrators and several volleys were fired in the air, but the crowd did not disperse. During the demonstrations on June 7, the Questura and press reported 2 persons killed and 19 wounded. This was the most serious incident which had taken place up to that time. [...]

Over the weekend of the 8th and 9th the city was relatively quiet and nothing particularly serious occurred on Monday, June 10th, but the afternoon and evening of June 11th, witnessed the most serious incidents that had yet occurred in Naples during all of the pre and post election activity. This demonstration which took place mainly outside the Communist Headquarters in Via Medina lasted for a matter of hours and ended with an attempt by the crowd to enter the Questura at which point the police fired directly into the crowd. [...] This unfortunate incident resulted in the deaths of seven people and the injury of about 50 according to the Questura. Following this incident, numerous so-called ringleaders of the Monarchists were arrested, many of whom are still being held according to reports. [...]

Although all of the demonstrations appeared to be spontaneous and very badly organized, there is little doubt that there was some group behind these demonstrations of what might be called the rabble. [...] At the demonstration on the 11th, the members of the staff saw at least three agitators going through the onlookers urging them to join the

demonstrators. At least one of these persons is known to be a person of a prominent local family, a former lieutenant in the regular army. [...]

There has been much speculation as to whom the leaders of the monarchist separatist groups may be. The following persons have been linked with such movements:

General Verdi  
General Bergstrom  
Prince Gianni Caracciolo  
Avvocato Rivetti

To the best of the knowledge of the Consulate General none of these men have been detained by the police, although they are understood to be under observation. As yet no information has been obtained concerning the first two generals other than that they are both retired Army officers. Under cover of a letter dated June 10, 1946, the Consulate General forwarded to the Embassy a memorandum concerning Prince Caracciolo in which it was pointed out that he was a hotheaded chap who is obsessed with a fear of Communism, who served as a volunteer in the Italian forces in Spain and who has been very active of late in connection with some pro-monarchist activity. It was stated however in that memorandum that although he might support a separatist movement, he didn't seem to have the capacity to lead it. He was known to have been seeking a boat presumably for escape from Italy following the June 11th incident. The Consulate General has no information on Rivetti who was mentioned as a Monarchist by the Political Section of the Questura.

A prominent Socialist known to the office when asked for the name of the outstanding leader of the Monarchist group in Southern Italy gave the name of Lucifero, the brother of former King Umberto's aid. He is a large landowner in Catanzaro and a deputy from that area. His usual place of abode is in Rome.

**E. Minister Counselor Byington to State Department, January 26, 1950.**

Information has been received, in what might be classified as a 'high grade rumor' that Movement is receiving substantial monetary support from wealthy, nostalgic Italians in Argentina, Spain, and Portugal. [...] Should violence at Garbatella inaugurate a series of similar actions, Government may be expected to concentrate its forces of public order on MSI, as it has on Communists. In Embassy's view, negligible influence of neo-Fascism may be largely attributed to success of the Government in controlling Communist "squadrist", since the two undemocratic movements classically thrive in the mutual opposition of each other's company. [...]

Now, however, violence at Garbatella (which was a sufficiently large operation so that it almost certain occurred with knowledge and approval of top party leaders) may presage a return to illegal violence common before April 18, 1948.

It is certainly true that MSI was languishing in its non-violent role. While there undoubtedly is a small group within and without Italy eager for a return to Fascism, this prospect does not hold an appeal among any substantial group of the Italian electorate. Italy's economic recovery has provided contentment for the business leaders which welcomed Mussolini, while the working classes who have a genuine complaint in the widespread unemployment and low living standard that affects them directly, turn to the Communists.

An example of the weakened Fascist potential in Italy is displayed in the experience of an American newspaper correspondent, who has had long residence here both before and after the recent war. This correspondent has found that his acquaintances who were ardently Fascistic, both before and immediately after the war, have been drifting away from their Fascist views; they have come to appreciate the advantages of democracy and, 'while they may not like De Gasperi, they know they can at least have the satisfaction of criticizing him'. (This change is in sharp contrast to the corespondent's experience with the Germans of his acquaintance who were Hitler sympathizers before the war, and who, he finds, are still all 'unreconstructed Nazis'.<sup>977</sup>

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<sup>977</sup> Byington to State Department, January 26, 1950, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1946-1964, Box 75.

## F. Minister Counselor Byington to State Department, March 7, 1950.

### Summary:

A new element in the political scene during the last two weeks has been the emergence of the possibility of an alignment of the three so-called “national” parties, the Liberal, Monarchist, and Italian Social Movement or MSI. This possibility, which has been eagerly hailed by ultra-independent Tempo and conservative independent Giornale D’Italia, and greeted with abhorrence by Republican Voce Repubblicana, was first voiced by MSI Secretary General De Marsanich on February 26. The Liberal Party has strongly denied that any liaison with the MSI is possible, but the Monarchists and MSI continue to be seriously interested in the idea. The Monarchists feel that such an alignment might win back those of natural Liberal, MSI and Monarchist sympathies who have supported the Christian Democrats merely because they fear Communism above all else and have feared to waste their votes on small parties. Voce Repubblicana says the step would mark a transition from the MSI-type Fascism, a mere pathological phenomenon, to a Fascism “more disturbing because reinforced by strong reactionary groups intent upon a political operation of vast scope.” Actually all three Rightist parties seem to have acquired new resources, and the question arises whether or to what extent the monied interests are switching their support to them and away from the Christian Democrats.

### Liberal Party Denial of Possibility its Entering Bloc:

The MSI trial balloon met with an instantaneous rebuff from the Liberals. Secretary General of the Liberal Party, Avv. Villabruna, has publicly denied that the Liberals are even considering becoming an ally of MSI. He has said even more heatedly in private to a member of the Embassy staff that such a move would be inconceivable since it would be tantamount to the party’s contributing to the return of Fascism. The party is completely united on this stand, he said. [...]

### Nature of the Proposed Bloc

From conversations with Villabruna, with the Vice Secretary of the National Monarchist Party (ex-Ambassador to Paris Guido Rocco) and with a member of the Monarchist Party Executive (Marchese Monte della Scaglione) and from the press, we can see the general outline of what the bloc would favor were it ever to come into existence. Briefly, it would work to restore Italian ‘national dignity’ and independence, and make Italy once more a ‘respected’ member of the family of nations. While they are friendly to the Church, they feel that Church

and State should remain separation (as under the monarchy, for example). The Christian Democrats by acting as the agent of the Church have confused Church and State and permitted the Vatican to interfere in a manner not befitting Italian national 'dignity', and Sforza and the Christian Democrats are to be condemned for having accepted it. Although the colonies were always a national expense, they were part of Italian national history and their loss is to be mourned. Establishment of the regions will destroy hard-won Italian national unity. Germany as well as Italy should be readmitted to the place 'that is its due' in the European family of nations and Italy and Germany should develop close ties. The Atlantic Pact is necessary, as is European Union.

#### Comment

Though the possibility of formation of a Rightist Bloc remains at the discussion stage, it will probably long be with us. Even though the Liberals have not risen to the bait, the possibility of an eventual liaison between the MSI and the National Monarchist Party still clearly remains.

These developments are all a part of the picture of recent increased activity of all three Rightwing parties. [...] The propaganda campaign of the Liberals has already been reported on. [...] The Monarchists say they are in the course of launching a similar campaign, aimed principally at the North. The MSI has stepped up its activities considerably by both public meetings and by a series of punitive expeditions against Communist party organizations. The question arises whence comes the financial backing for all this activity? Villabruna thinks the Fascists are being helped by land-owners and industrialists (though by only a very small percentage of each group.) We might guess that the same would be true for the Liberals and the Monarchists. Whether there has been any substantial defection of the wealthy group which as heretofore given most of its support to the Christian Democrats, is not yet clear.<sup>978</sup>

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<sup>978</sup> Byington to State Department, March 7, 1950, NARA, RG 84, Rome Embassy General Records 1946-1964, Box 75.

**G. Prefect Paternò to Interior Ministry, August 30, 1949.**

Si comunica che l'Associazione Monarchici Indipendenti, sorta recentemente in Napoli ad iniziativa di dissidenti del Partito Nazionale Monarchico conterebbe in questa provincia circa 10 mila iscritti.

Ne sono esponenti provvisori:

1. Presidente: Duca Paolo Marulli d'Ascoli Troiano fu Sebastiano, assessore comunale:
2. Vice Presidente: De Giovanni Giovanni di Santaseverina di Vincenzo, avvocato, già iscritto al disciolto partito fascista in seno al quale ricoprì la carica di fiduciario del gruppo rionale "Luparini":
3. Vice Presidente: Petra Duca di Caccuri Carlo fu Raffaele, generale dell'esercito in pensione:
4. Segretario politico: Buriani Simone di Giovanni, avvocato:
5. Addetto assistenza e propaganda: Mongillo Vanda in Grillo fu Carmine, casalinga:
6. organizzatore: Verde Gustavo fu Eduardo, colonnello dell'esercito

## H. **Ambassador Luce to President Eisenhower, November 7, 1953.**

The Communist Party leads the only well-organized, well-financed, strongly disciplined, dynamic mass movement in Italy. The Cominform Left (including Nenni Socialists) polled 37% of the vote in the June elections. Its strength is growing steadily. If it gains only 4% more from the Center to Right parties by the next elections (which will take place either in the Spring of '54 or '55), the President of Italy will be required by the Constitution to call upon a Cominform leader (Nenni or Togliatti) to form the next government.

The Pella government can fall at any time. It is, by its own definition, a "transition government." As presently constituted, if it is not dead, it is dormant. Only the pressures converging on it from Left and Right keep it standing on its feet.

The Monarchist Party (6.9%) is conservative, if not reactionary. It seeks popularity and power, but its program is essentially constructed to protect the interests of the land holders and industrialists, and has no appeal to the masses apart from its sentimental championship of the exiled monarchy. It is fairly well heeled. Its tendency is towards a more authoritarian government: there are elements in the Party that will go for Dictatorship as well as Monarchy.

The Fascist Party (the MSI, 5.8%) is anti-American, isolationist, nationalistic, currently ineffectual, but in view of the steady rise of the Left and the slow deterioration of the Democratic Center parties—opportunistically hopeful.

There are only four possible alternatives to Communism in Italy today:

- (a) The successful reconstruction and reorganization of the Center parties and their programs.
- (b) The successful restoration of the Monarchy.
- (c) A successful Dictatorship of the Right.
- (d) A combination of (b) and (c).

## VII.

I assume that Alternative (a) is the only one compatible with both US political ideology and US foreign policies. It has small chance of success, however, without vigorous American support. And, in my

opinion, even with that support its chances are not much more than even.<sup>979</sup>

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<sup>979</sup> Luce to Eisenhower, November 3, 1953, in Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western Europe and Canada, Volume VI, Part 2, Document no. 753, p. 1632, Luce files, lot 64 F 26, "Letters 1953".

**I. Chief of WE (Byington) to Merchant, November 12, 1953.**

“Sections I through VII of Ambassador Luce’s estimate outline the current drift toward Communism in Italy and the probability that unless vigorous political action is taken by the non-Communist opposition, within two years, Italy will be the first Western democratic nation, by legal democratic procedures, to get a Communist government.”

It appears to me that Mrs. Luce’s analysis in these first paragraphs gives a very good portrayal of the real danger of Communism that exists in the present Italian political situation. I would agree completely that if normal democratic processes are followed there is in fact the danger that we shall find in Italy a government which will include Nenni or Togliatti, or both. There might well follow a Communist take-over from within. Whether this might or might not happen within two years is open to doubt.

I do not believe, however, there is sufficient emphasis on the fact that, as Mrs. Luce points out, the maximum Communist potentiality in the polls may be somewhere in the neighborhood of 41 per cent. This leaves some 59 per cent of Italians on the other side of the fence. These non-Communist Italians, while unable at present to get together successfully on a political program, are nevertheless strongly, and in many cases bitterly, anti-Communist. As the Communist danger becomes more apparent it is my opinion that the opposition of this 59 per cent will become stronger and will tend to coalesce in favor of a more authoritative form of government which can deal drastically with Communist tactics in a way that is beyond the power of the present form of government in Italy limited to Italian democratic processes. The 59 per cent non-Communists of Italy include, except for the small body of trained leaders among the Communists, the overwhelming mass of better educated and more intelligent and energetic Italians. This non-Communist group includes practically all of the police and practically all of the Italian armed forces. It includes the vast majority of highly skilled workers and the bourgeoisie as well as most of the professional classes. Although in numbers the balance is fairly even, in actual strength the non-Communists have an overwhelming advantage.

I very much doubt whether these groups will wait for a Communist victory at the polls or if there should be a Communist victory at the polls will remain passive until they are ground down under the Communist totalitarian machine. The prospect of a Rightist dictatorship as the only alternative to Communism would, in my opinion, meet with their preference. I would envisage therefore rather than Communism more likelihood of a Rightist authoritarian regime emerging from a

chaotic Italian situation. In fact, non-Communist Italians will become ripe for such a development as the danger of Communist control becomes more evident.

I certainly agree with Mrs. Luce's estimate that successful reconstruction and reorganization of the center parties and their programs is the only development in Italy compatible with "both U.S. political ideology and U.S. foreign policies". I also agree with Mrs. Luce's estimate that . . . the center parties' chances are not much more than even.

In paragraph VIII Mrs. Luce outlines methods of assisting the center parties. These are sound and would unquestionably be of decisive influence if they could all be used. They depend, however, to a certain extent on many factors outside U.S. control. How quickly we can achieve US-UK agreement on implementation (partial or complete) of the October 8 decision on Trieste is not a matter that depends only on us. Likewise the problem of over-population, stabilization of world currency and the opening of U.S. and other markets to Italian trade depend on many developments not under the control of the Administration. I would agree that we should support all of these measures, but it would, in my opinion, be unrealistic to count on success in all these fields. Therefore we must necessarily consider now what we can do immediately to encourage the democratic elements in Italy to stand up for themselves.

As regards current issues the Ambassador certainly is correct in her conclusion that failure to implement either partially or completely the October 8 decision will result in the fall of the present Pella Government. We must work our way through this matter successfully or face serious consequences not only in Italy, but to our entire European policy.<sup>980</sup>

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<sup>980</sup> Byington Memorandum, November 12, 1953, in Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Western Europe and Canada, Volume VI, Part 2, Document no.755, p. 1637. Italian-Austrian Desk files, lot 58 D 243, "Policy Debates—Winter 1953-1954"

**J. Ambassador Martin to Kissinger, April 2, 1971.**

The Borghese affair has had another by-product. Two of the five individuals taken into custody had been in touch with some senior military officers who are uncertain whether the extent of their involvement in alleged coup plotting, not directly but peripherally connected with Borghese, may now come to light. This has led to consideration of accelerating their planning for a military take-over of the government. [...]

I do not believe this plan can succeed. The estimates of 70 percent chances of success are considerably inflated. No such plan can possibly succeed without overwhelming support from both the army and the carabinieri. Without General Marchesi, Chief of Defense Staff, neither will be available. And for the time being, at least, Marchesi seems committed to work on getting some unity in the Christian Democrats for an orderly evolution. Marchesi realizes that no such plan could really succeed unless the necessity for such action was crystal clear to the public and had the backing of at least some principal political figure to provide an aura of legitimacy. Without this, and neither pre-condition exists now, Marchesi knows much blood would be likely to flow. [...]

I conclude therefore, that under these circumstances, the last thing we need is a half-baked coup attempt motivated in its timing largely by the fact that General Fanali is facing retirement this summer and his time is short. [...]

Al Haig indicated awareness of Air Force and Navy restiveness when I last talked with him and Sid Chief General Miceli has made veiled references to White House representatives. The president has told me not to let country drift further to the left. I don't intend to, but it just might make the job a bit easier if some better way could be devised to keep me personally informed of the bits and pieces which come to your attention there.<sup>981</sup>

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<sup>981</sup> Martin to Kissinger, April 2, 1971, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/LOC-HAK-165-5-9-4.pdf> Accessed January 10, 2017.

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