

Scowcroft file

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SECRET/XGDS

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Richard M. Nixon
Amb. John A. Volpe, United States Ambassador
to Italy
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant
to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Thursday, June 6, 1974
9:30 a.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

The President: You seem to be surviving.

Ambassador Volpe: I have a few problems but not of the kind you have. It is a fascinating assignment. People go to Rome and think they know Italy. I was the second Ambassador in 14 years to go to Sicily. No one else has been to the Adrintic coast.

The port workers at Naples were so good to me. I toured the port and the workers were eating lunch. When they saw the American flag, they started cheering. I got out and shook hands. Even though they belong to the Communist union, they will be proud they shook hands with the American Ambassador.

I do the same with the young people. I want the Italians to see the American Ambassador.

In Milan, half the people I talked to had been to America. Watergate rarely comes up. I am establishing rapport with the media people.

I saw President Leone who is enamored with his visit to you. This is the first time an Italian President has ever been to dinner at the Ambassador's house. He said he did it from admiration for America and

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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5

NSC Memo, 11/24/98, State Dept. Guidelines (Subser)
By KSH, NARA, Date 6/29/99

because of my work and because of his like for you. Leone wrote an editorial and said that there were Watergate buggers in Italy too, but in the U. S. they clean house and in Italy it is covered up or a couple of small fish go to jail.

You can't imagine the respect in which you are held in Italy -- with the leaders and the people.

I saw the Pope on June 1st. He was gracious to me.

The President: What about the political situation?

Ambassador Volpe: The Pope said he not only suffers with you but he prays for you and hopes this cup will soon pass.

The political situation is not good, but the Italian people are resilient. Rome is not Italy.

Although the provinces know they have serious problems, they have the determination to deal with them.

A military coup is possible but I don't believe it can really happen.

The President: How about the leadership?

Ambassador Volpe: Leone is fine.

The President: Rumor is pleasant but not strong.

Ambassador Volpe: Andreotti is now the Minister of Defense.

The President: He is strong. It's too bad he has not a good base.

Ambassador Volpe: The government is not in as much trouble as expected from the divorce matter. If the Christian Democrats get ten percent less than usual in the June local elections, the government would probably fall.

I told Rumor you can't be nice to the Communists.

The President: Can we do more? We give love and kindness.

Ambassador Volpe: Henry should stop in Rome. We can encourage them.

The President: You tell them we appreciate their standing firm. We have great respect for them. We and the world are watching them. What they do will certainly impact on the Latin world. The French have come through okay.

It's ridiculous for Italians to be so poor at government -- they run business well. If they could just get a guy like deGasperi. When we come to Europe, Italy will be included as one of the Big Four. They must face up to the leadership problem. Maybe they need a change in their constitution like France.

[The conversation ended.]



Pros/Volpe

0930 June 6, 1974

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P You seem to be ~~surprised~~ ^{surprised}

V I have a few pros but that into you have. It is for country assignment. People go to Rome & think they know Italy. I was 2nd about in 14 years to go to Sicily. No one else has been to Adriatic coast.

The part workers at N. Alps were so good to me. I found a part of workers were eating lunch. When they saw US flag they started cheering. I got out, shook hand - saw the flag being to Great union, they will be proud they shake hands w/ US Amb.

I do a some w/c young people. I want a station to see the Am. Ambassador.

In Milan, 1/2 I talked to had heard to US.

Watergate really comes up. I see a lot support w/ media people.

I saw two hours - who knows w/ visit to you. This 1st time Station P ever been to dinner at Amb house. Said he said it for administration for US to my work & because of his like for you. ^{last election} ~~learn~~ ^{learn} that Watergate happens in Italy too, but in US, they clean house & in Italy it is covered up a couple of small fish.

You can't imagine respect in which you are held in Italy - w/ leaders & people.

I saw Pope John P. He gracious to me.

P What about Political Situation

V Pope said he not only supports w/ you but to help out for you & hopes this camp will soon pass. Pol sit not good, but Station people are resilient. Rome not Italy.



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E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5

NSC MEMO, 11/24/98, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES (Sulson)

BY ll, NARA, DATE 2/27/04

Altho a previous known they know parts, they
have intention to deal w/ them.

A military coup is possible but I'd not believe
it casually happens.

P How about leadership

V Rome is fine

P Rome is pleasant but not strong

V Ambrogi now Min Def

P He strong - to head out a good base

V ~~Rome~~ The Govt not in as much trouble as
expected from choice. If CD gets 10% less
than usual in June local election, a govt
would probably fall.

I told Rome you could be nice to host

P Can we do more? We can give tax & benefits.

V R should step in Rome.

We can manage them.

P You tell them we appreciate their standing
firm - we have good respect for them - we
and world watching them. What they do will
certainly impact on Latin world. I must
have come them off.

~~The~~ Reckoning for Stakis to be 20 per at govt -
they run business well.

If they could just get a gang like de Gorgoni.
When we come to the firm, Stakis will be
included as one of big 4. They must
give up to handing part. Maybe change
Custella to the F re e.

