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tried to make its voice heard during the crisis. The third section concentrates on the analysis of the Italian ambassador in Moscow, Pietromarchi, whose detailed journal has been recently made available for research, while the fourth and final section looks at the initiatives taken in the final weeks that preceded the construction of the wall, as well as at the immediate Italian reactions.¹

Italy and the beginning of the Berlin crisis: the background

Traditionally, Italian diplomacy has always been extremely sensitive to all matters of status and prestige: the least of the European great powers always tried to make up for its lack of power by resorting to the diplomatic skills of its foreign service and to some more or less elegant and successful balancing acts. After the failure of Mussolini's attempt to thrust the country into the top rank of world powers by a more forceful policy, the aftermath of World War II saw the return of Italian foreign policy to the previous reliance on skillful diplomatic manoeuvres to work its way into the exclusive circles of the West. Formally a defeated country, Italy strove to recover a position of parity with the other Western European powers by paying particular attention to its inclusion in all the various Western groupings, from the OEEC to the Atlantic alliance to the various steps of European integration. Inclusion in the UN took a longer time due to Soviet opposition, but was finally accomplished in 1955. It should be no surprise, therefore, that Italian diplomacy was particularly hostile to the creation of any arrangement from which it may be excluded and openly resented any attempts to set up any 'inner circles' in the organisations it belonged to – unless, of course, it was admitted to the club: any inkling that the German question might be solved by any such 'inner circle' of the Western powers would run against the basic tenets of post-war Italian diplomacy. Finally, this sensitivity was enhanced by the precarious domestic balance on which Italian foreign policy rested: with one-third of the electorate staunchly supporting the Italian Communist Party (PCI) and its anti-Western foreign policy, any Italian government had to prove to its domestic constituency that its pro-Western choices paid off and that Italian diplomacy was taken into due consideration by its allies whenever important international decisions had to be made. The leftwing opposition, in fact, never let go the chance of pouring scorn on the government whenever its Western allies failed to take Italian interests into account.²

The delicate basis on which Italy's Western alignment rested, moreover, affected the formulation of its foreign policy in other ways as well. After

the Christian Democrats (DC) lost in 1953 the absolute majority with which they had ruled both Houses of Parliament until then, Italian politics entered a period of prolonged instability, as the DC was forced to shift from one end of the political spectrum to the other in order to muster enough votes to retain control of the Parliament. In turn, this led many Italian politicians to look for a solution which might inject some stability into the system by cutting a deal between the pro-Western majority run by the Christian Democrats and the hitherto fellow-travelling and pro-Soviet Italian Socialist Party (PSI). The third largest party in the country after the DC and the Communists, the PSI, in the mid-1950s had begun a cautious withdrawal from its previous alliance with the PCI and a vacillating attempt at working its way into the government. The possible DC-PSI alliance, however, was regarded with the utmost concern both in Washington and by Italian conservative and pro-Western forces – and in particular by the Italian Foreign Ministry; and it was made all the more suspicious by the inclination of the PSI leader, the charismatic Pietro Nenni, not to sever his party's ties with the Communists in an abrupt and dramatic showdown.

Foreign policy quickly became one of the contested grounds in which the game was played. The supporters of the 'opening to the left' believed that Italian foreign policy would be a possible field for cooperation between the DC and the PSI, and to this purpose they propounded a new formula soon dubbed 'neo-Atlanticism', i.e. a mixture of defence of the country's traditional national interests, of *détente* between the blocs and of a more intense cooperation with the newly independent countries in the Mediterranean – and all of this more or less firmly anchored in the old NATO framework.³ The enemies of the 'opening to the left', on the other hand, saw the PSI as the Trojan horse of the PCI and believed that 'neo-Atlanticism' would weaken Italy's ties with the West. To them, the fact that the supporters of the new domestic formula also advocated a *détente* with the Eastern bloc was the clearest confirmation that the PSI could not be trusted as a member of the government. Thus, while both the right and the left found a common ground in advocating a role for Italy in any future negotiations about the settlement of the German question, they held strongly different views about the opportunity of an East-West *détente*. Supporters of the opening to the left believed that an international *détente* would also ease the dialogue between DC and PSI, while the enemies of the new formula opposed any relaxation of tensions at the international level for exactly the same reason.

Closely interrelated to these issues was the third crucial element that affected the formulation of Italian foreign policy on the Berlin issue, namely the desire, by and large shared by those political forces who wanted to promote the DC-PSI *rapprochement*, to encourage some form of dialogue with the Soviet Union in the economic field. This approach was backed not only by the moderate left, but also by some of the most influential names of Italian economy, such as the general manager of FIAT, Vittorio Valletta, and the president of the State Oil Company (ENI, *Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi*) Enrico Mattei: the former, however, preferred working behind the scenes, while Mattei, in his constant search for cheap energy sources for Italy and in his no-holds-barred fight against the Anglo-Saxon oil majors, had no qualms about striking a number of surprising commercial agreements with the Soviet Union from 1958 on.

To sum up, by the time the Berlin crisis got started Italian foreign and domestic policies were in a state of flux. While remaining loyal to its Western commitments, Italian foreign policy was increasingly subjected to strong strains which threatened to alter its hitherto more predictable course.

Italy and the Berlin crisis: resentments and gambits

Before the crisis

In 1957-58, when the Western powers began to formally consult among themselves about possible solutions to the problem of German reunification, Italy clearly resented its exclusion from the quadripartite working group created by the US, the UK, France and the Federal Republic. The memoirs of Ambassador Egidio Ortona, who was at the time the vice-chief of mission in Washington, reveal that from its inception the idea of the four-power working group generated a near state of panic among the ranks of Italian diplomacy and in the Foreign Ministry in Rome. Ambassador Brosio shuttled back and forth between the Italian embassy and the State Department to forcefully protest the Italian exclusion, but to no avail.⁴ When US Vice-President Richard Nixon visited Italy in March 1957, the three most important political figures in the country, President Giovanni Gronchi, Prime Minister Segni and Foreign Minister Martino, all made clear their desire that Italy be consulted on a more regular basis by the US.⁵

The follow-up to Nixon's visit clearly shows the domestic implications of any affront – real or not – to the country's prestige. Shortly after Nixon's departure, in fact, President Gronchi wrote a personal letter

for President Eisenhower in which he repeated his disappointment about the Italian exclusion from the quadripartite Working Group, and added that any future arrangement about Germany should take into account his country's point of view – much to the chagrin of the Italian Foreign Ministry, which resented this display of personal presidential diplomacy not because of its substance, with which it entirely agreed, but because it feared that, if delivered, the letter would enhance the position of the president in the domestic arena, where Gronchi was regarded as one of the staunchest proponents of the 'opening to the left'.⁶ The Foreign Ministry, therefore, never forwarded the missive and a few weeks later both the Italian ambassador in Washington, Brosio, and Foreign Minister Martino, presented the case to John Foster Dulles: while they grudgingly acknowledged that the Four Powers had a 'special responsibility' on Germany, they insisted that the exclusion of Italy was being exploited by President Gronchi to 'undermine the government and build up the strength of the Left'. On the other hand, Martino added, the German problem was strictly connected to the broader issues of European security and disarmament, in which Italy obviously had a very keen interest. To alleviate any possible tensions between the Western Allies, Martino therefore proposed the creation of a number of Working Groups inside NATO, a suggestion which found Dulles interested but sceptical about its chances of success.⁷

The issue was further compounded by the Soviet diplomatic offensive of late 1957, when Moscow raised the prospect of a conference to deal with other issues in addition to the German one, such as disarmament and the end of nuclear testing. This raised the opportunity that Italy be included in the group that would approach the Soviets to explore the chances of a conference, but Italian hopes were almost immediately frustrated.⁸ Several proposals and counterproposals were put forward in the following months,⁹ and as speculation about a summit conference rose, so did Italian pressures to be included in any future gathering: the request was officially made by the Italian Prime Minister, Adone Zoli, in a letter in early 1958, in which he asked that Italy be allowed to participate in all stages of a possible summit conference.¹⁰ In May 1958, at the Copenhagen Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Foreign Minister Pella dramatically repeated the appeal, linking it to the possibility of swinging a large number of votes at the impending political elections: the best that Italy could get, however, was a communiqué in which the US, the UK and France acknowledged that any future summit conference should not be limited to the countries participating

in the preliminary talks with the Soviets and explicitly cited Italy as a possible participant.¹¹

By the time the Berlin crisis got started, therefore, Italy had already accumulated quite a large amount of frustrations at having its aspirations to play a role in any conference on Germany and European security almost completely neglected. In the next few months, this would strongly influence the Italian reactions to the crisis.

During the crisis

During the period from the Khrushchev memorandum to the construction of the Wall, four different Italian cabinets followed each other (led, in turn, by Fanfani, Segni, Tambroni and by Fanfani again), but only the second and the fourth lasted long enough to shape Italian policy on the Berlin issue, while the others were too short lived to have any impact. Tambroni's government, in particular, was too deeply absorbed in its domestic troubles to be able to dedicate much time to the issue. All the four prime ministers were Christian Democrats, but there were important shades in their political orientation, Fanfani being inclined toward the 'opening to the left', while Tambroni's and Segni's were much more conservative. These political differences had a remarkable influence on the cabinets' attitude toward *détente*, but in spite of their contrasts all shared the assumption that Italy must play a role in the management of the crisis and be fully consulted by its Allies.¹²

After Khrushchev's ultimatum the first reaction of the Foreign Ministry was to define the Soviet move as 'considerably more serious' than any of the previous harassments over Berlin, and in early December the ambassadors in Bonn, at the NATO council and in the capitals of the Eastern bloc were all summoned to Rome for a review of the situation.¹³ Prime Minister Fanfani, however, took a less dramatic position: while he asserted his belief that the Soviet move called for some 'new thinking', he acknowledged the fact that in the Western camp the response should come from the Federal Republic and that Italy should not take any initiative, in particular if it could count on receiving 'separate briefings' from the State Department through Ambassador Brosio. If, however, there was to be an international conference, Italy did want to be counted in, since its government recognised that 'while there was a special four-power responsibility for Germany, if European security questions were discussed Italy at once became involved since this was concern of all'.¹⁴

In the following months this cautious, balanced attitude was modified in several ways and led to rather contradictory policies. The Fanfani

cabinet was replaced in February 1959 by a new one with Segni as prime minister and, once again, Giuseppe Pella as foreign minister. The new team initially wavered between a conciliatory and an assertive role, even going as far as taking some timid steps towards an improvement of its relations with Moscow.¹⁵ This policy was soon abandoned, however, to be replaced by a more hard line approach: by the end of March, the Italian government concluded a nine-months long negotiation with the US (which had been initiated by Fanfani in July 1958) and became the first continental European country to deploy on its territory thirty 'Jupiter' IRBMs under a dual key arrangement. No sooner were the weapons deployed than Pella and other Italian diplomats began harping on the theme that Italy's new heavy nuclear responsibilities entitled the country to participate in any international meeting where security issues were being discussed.¹⁶ At the same time, the harsh Soviet reaction at the deployment of the missiles basically excluded the possibility of playing the role of the mediator at the international level.

There followed what basically amounted to a split in the conduct of Italian foreign policy if it were not for the fact that both lines of action maintained the common objective of having Italy play a role in the evolution of the crisis.¹⁷ On the one hand, Segni and Pella abandoned any aspiration to mediate between the USSR and the West, and actually began to stress at every possible moment the perils of *détente*, recommending to all and sundry the virtues of firmness against the Soviet threats and warning that any talk of *détente* was not only illusory but dangerous for its domestic consequences.¹⁸ Faced with a rather precarious domestic balance and forced to rely on the votes of the extreme right, they knew that an international *détente* would make easier a reprise of the domestic dialogue between the PSI and the DC, and they did their very best to prevent this from happening. This led to some rather humorous moments, as when in their Washington trip of September 1959 both Segni and his foreign minister believed it necessary to warn President Eisenhower and Secretary Herter of the dangers of a hasty *détente* for its unpredictable impact on the Italian domestic scene – without thinking that perhaps Ike's order of priorities might have been slightly different.¹⁹ After their initial hesitations, therefore, Segni and Pella eventually chose to side with those hardliners like de Gaulle and Adenauer who opposed the very idea of negotiating with the Soviets under the pressure of Khrushchev's ultimatum. If there had to be a negotiation, its real goal was to demonstrate the ultimate Soviet duplicity and unmask their propaganda, which, as Segni tirelessly repeated, only made life easier for the Italian communists.²⁰

This stance of the Italian government was opposed by many powerful forces inside the country, first of all by the president of the Republic himself who insisted that Italy should try to mediate between the West and Moscow. Gronchi was probably motivated by his desire to reassert Italy's prestige at a time when negotiations with the Soviets had eventually taken place in Geneva without Italy being invited, as well as to bring about the opening to the left in Italian politics, which he regarded as impossible without a relaxation of tensions at the international level. Thus he led an almost personal foreign policy, relying on the advice of the Italian ambassador in Moscow, Luca Pietromarchi,²¹ and on the powerful support of ENI's Enrico Mattei, who not only shared his desire to bring about the opening to the left but was also quite interested in the economic possibilities of an agreement with the Soviet Union. Their policy led to two rather momentous events, which signalled to Italy's partners its willingness to play a more conspicuous role as the crisis was unfolding.

In early 1960, after a rather ambiguous postponement at the last moment, President Gronchi visited the Soviet Union – the first head of State of a Western country to do so after World War II. As would be the case with the Fanfani trip a year later, it was not entirely clear where the initiative came from, but it is likely that the Soviet invitation had been solicited by someone in Gronchi's staff;²² in any case, the president had made clear for a long time his ambition to visit the USSR, since the Soviet ambassador in Rome, Kozyrev, already knew about it in October 1958.²³ Gronchi's expectations for a momentous breakthrough, however, were severely disappointed as his meetings with Khrushchev turned into harsh debates over the virtues of the opposite political camps. At one particular moment Gronchi actually found himself playing a role he would not probably have ever imagined, as he had to bluntly oppose Khrushchev's statements over Germany; and in the most embarrassing episode of the whole trip, he had to face some rather tasteless anti-Italian jokes that Khrushchev uttered during a public reception – which in turn in the following days led Gronchi to extol the virtues of Italian culture over the Russian one.²⁴ The trip, therefore, had basically no consequences from the international point of view; it had, however, some unexpected domestic repercussions, leading to the downfall of the Segni government and to a phase of protracted turmoil which ended only four months later with the resignation of the new prime minister, Ferdinando Tambroni.

During this period, ENI worked hard to modify the previous commercial agreements with the USSR, and in the autumn of 1960 a new agreement

was signed in Moscow according to which Italy would import 12 million tons of Soviet crude oil in four years, and export to the USSR synthetic rubber, diesel engines and, above all, 240,000 tons of steel pipelines.²⁵ By itself, the overall percentage of Soviet oil to be imported did not make Italy dependent on Moscow for its supplies (Soviet crude imports remained the 13 per cent of Italy's total in 1960), but it represented a large increase over the previous amount, and above all it came at a time when the Western oil majors were beginning to worry about the Soviet 'oil offensive' towards the West. Italy was therefore regarded by the majors as little less than an accomplice in Moscow's effort to disrupt the traditional channels of world oil distribution, in particular because the purchase of Italian pipelines greatly improved Moscow's capabilities to export its crude to Western Europe. Taken together with Gronchi's initiative, therefore, Mattei's oil deal seemed to outline the contours of a different Italian policy towards the USSR – asserting a somewhat more independent line from the other Western countries in spite of the reassurances coming from Rome.

While Italy alternated between the Segni-Pella and the Gronchi-Mattei lines, Italian diplomacy strove hard to be included in the East-West negotiations, but to no avail: Italy was not invited to the Geneva meetings of foreign ministers, and the best that Palazzo Chigi could get was a face-saving invitation to Pella to come to Geneva for a separate encounter with the new US Secretary of State, Christian Herter, in which they discussed a number of broad issues and Pella repeated the customary plea.²⁶ Only by the end of the year did Italian efforts lead to some rather modest results: in September Italy was included in the so-called Ten Nations Committee set up by the United Nations to work on disarmament problems, and a few weeks later, when a number of small Working Groups were created to coordinate the position of the Western countries in preparation for the May 1960 Summit conference, it was again included in the group dealing on disarmament problems, which formally began its meetings in January 1960.²⁷ In spite of this, however, Italian diplomats regarded the situation as quite unsatisfactory, as ambassador Brosio expressed to the State Department in rather blunt words in early 1960.²⁸

Negociier, negociier, negociier: Ambassador Pietromarchi and the view from Moscow

Throughout the crisis an important role in shaping Italian policy towards Moscow was played by the Italian ambassador in the Soviet

Union, Luca Pietromarchi, whose interpretation of the Soviet diplomatic offensive and coherent suggestions provided a steady, if somewhat over-optimistic counterpoint to the comings and goings of the various cabinets in Rome. A professional diplomat at the end of a long career, Pietromarchi was appointed ambassador to the USSR in October 1958 at his own request, as he acknowledged in his memoirs: 'I wanted to study Communism "on the spot" in order to understand directly the practical value of the ideas underlying it, to assess the limits and the results of the application of Marxism's fundamental principles, and to compare Communism and Capitalism.'²⁹ During his term, which ended in March 1961, the ambassador dedicated much attention to the economic and social aspects of Soviet life, as the unpublished version of his journals reveals.³⁰

The goal of his mission, of course, went beyond the mere scholarly comparison of the virtues of the two political systems. On 6 October 1958, two days after arriving in Moscow, at a meeting with the secretary general of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, Podresov, he openly stated that he intended:

to hasten and get rid of those little nuisances that created an attraction between Moscow and Rome, in order to move forward towards an atmosphere of trust, friendly comprehension and cooperation. Italy was perhaps the only Western country which held no serious grudge [against Moscow] and which could therefore – better than anybody else – dedicate itself to the necessary work of clarification, *détente*, and moderation with the impartiality and the serenity of a friend.³¹

Pietromarchi used a similar language in his first meeting with Foreign Minister Gromyko on October 22. At the end of a difficult, sometimes even harsh conversation about the most irksome issues in the relationship between the two countries, namely war reparations and POWs, the ambassador told the minister that:

he was in a hurry to eliminate these small and irritating issues to start a serene cooperation in the interests of peace. [He regarded] the international situation as terrible, and [felt] that every effort was necessary to improve on it. One could not live indefinitely in such a heated atmosphere. It was mandatory to re-establish a minimum of mutual trust.

He believed in 'the Soviet Union's peace policy and in its willingness to alleviate the tension', and therefore in the possibility of building better relations. In short, he wanted Italy to play a clarifying role between the blocs, and the first step was to improve its relations with Moscow.

Pietromarchi's language might have been a simple expedient to alleviate the tension with Gromyko – 'a dark, bulky, gloomy man' whose 'resistance' he found superior to his worse expectations – in order to smoothen the elaboration of a compromise on reparations and POWs, two issues which the Italian Foreign Ministry really wanted to get out of the way. On the other hand, getting rid of these controversies might have been just a short term goal, whose achievement would allow Italy to move forward towards more ambitious objectives. A *détente* with Moscow would open such broad vistas to Rome's foreign policy as to make the idea of turning Italy into a bridge between East and West less unreal and utopian. Personally, Pietromarchi had no doubts that this was to be the master plan, but inside the Italian government there were doubts aplenty. In Rome, the ambassador remarked 'there was no clear vision of what we want to do, of why we should do it, and above all of where we want to arrive'.

Among the members of the Atlantic alliance, our country is the only one which does not have any large pending issues with the Soviet Union and which can therefore play a clarifying and moderating role to alleviate the international tension. Any other of our Allies would be happy to have this opportunity and to assume such an important function. We have been distracted by petty squabbles, hesitations and rancours which have hidden the importance of the task that becomes us. It is not just for the sake of the country's prestige that Italy must assume this role, but for a much more vital reason: for the sake of world peace... What must be stressed as clearly as possible is that we are not going to loosen our Atlantic ties, but to build upon them and to ease the efforts of all men of goodwill to save peace and consolidate the security of all peoples. The action which is required of us and that fits us is a covert job, because it will be all the more effective if it will be discreet and confidential, as it becomes a loyal and trustworthy ally. Complying to the role of the supine servant lest we irritate the master is not a policy. It is an abdication to have such a policy and we were not born to be anyone's eunuchs or the harem's guards.³²

The paradigm that Pietromarchi proposed, however, had to be reconciled with the uncertain orientation – or, even worse, the lack thereof – of the Italian government's Soviet policy. The ambassador's journals emphasise a variety of messages, directives and suggestions from Rome, frequent blackouts whenever there was a change at the top of the Ministry, and many long waits in the antechamber of the minister's office, whenever his excellency was engaged in some more pressing business. The policy the ambassador suggested, moreover, should also take into account the mood of Italian public opinion, which would not understand the new strategy of friendliness towards Khrushchev unless it had been adequately prepared and persuaded of its advantages. And finally, the whole project of turning Italy into the moderator of the East-West relationship hung on the development of the dialogue between Rome and Moscow: would the Kremlin 'understand the importance of the role which Italy could play' and, to that end, stop 'insisting on such petty requests' as the payment of war reparations?³³

Difficult as they might have been, these variables of the equation were at least known and predictable quantities and would make possible the formulation of a policy. What Pietromarchi could not expect when he drafted his programme was that in a few weeks a new dramatic crisis would be opened in the heart of Europe, but he soon came to the conclusion that the confrontation over Berlin could be turned into a good test to evaluate Italy's capacity to translate into concrete proposals the vague aspirations to mediate between the blocs.

From its start, the Berlin crisis became the leitmotiv of Pietromarchi's notes. He followed it with the greatest attention, trying to understand why the Kremlin's attitude seemed so erratic and what could be its future development, and above all trying to figure out the possible windows of opportunity for an Italian initiative in what many regarded as a confrontation limited to the superpowers alone. In his own reconstructions of the crisis – be they made on the spot or at a later time – the ambassador believed that its starting point was 10 November, when Khrushchev and the Polish leader Wladislaw Gomulka, in a rally held at Moscow's Sport Palace, launched into a violent tirade against the Federal Republic of Germany 'for its *revanchiste* policies and above all for the threat posed by its rearmament, in particular its nuclear one'. At the end of his invectives against Bonn, Khrushchev stated the necessity to denounce the Four-Power arrangement in Berlin and his intention to turn over to the German Democratic Republic the functions hitherto executed by the Soviet authorities in the former German capital. 'The prevailing interpretation – Pietromarchi noted in his

journals – is that this stance was caused by two things: the concern for the situation in East Germany, and the interest in justifying to the Polish public opinion the necessity of an intimate union between Poland and Russia to face the dangers of German militarism';³⁴ even later, Pietromarchi would always regard the Polish variable as crucial to understand Khrushchev's Berlin offensive.³⁵ None of the many diplomats with whom the ambassador was in touch in the Soviet capital, however, held an answer to the crucial question 'How far is Russia willing to go?'³⁶ As for himself, the ambassador personally thought that the Kremlin's tactics envisaged a first violent blow to sound Western reactions, and the following developments of the crisis confirmed him in his initial perception.³⁷ The Western reaction was therefore extremely important for the evolution of the crisis, all the more so because Pietromarchi believed that the impulsive Khrushchev did not have a clear line of conduct and that he improvised many of his initiatives.³⁸

Pietromarchi maintained that this reaction should first of all be based on a firm display of unanimity, since Khrushchev was probing for the weak spots in the opposite coalition.³⁹ The critical issue, which Pietromarchi repeated *ad nauseam*, was that the Soviet Union could not afford the luxury of a war: the launch of the extremely ambitious seven-year economic plan made a truce an inescapable necessity for the Kremlin. This practical impossibility for Moscow to bring its diplomatic offensive to its extreme consequences represented the main advantage that the West had at its disposal. The West should be firm, and at the same time avoid any threats, intimidations or provocations; and while this firmness excluded any cession, it did not preclude the search for a mutually satisfactory compromise.⁴⁰

Finally, even if the Kremlin had been forced to act by the joint pressure exercised by Ulbricht, Grotewhol and Gomulka, Pietromarchi believed that Khrushchev's goal went beyond a mere solution for the status of Berlin and even beyond the prevention of a West German nuclear rearmament: his real aim was a Summit conference to solve not only the German question but also to discuss the broader issues of security. The preparation for such a Summit would be long and difficult, punctuated by many intermediate meetings at all levels, and in the meantime the Soviet manoeuvre on Berlin would lose its dramatic overtones. In short, the West should 'buy time by negotiating'⁴¹ and reply to the Soviet tactic with a similar one, based on 'intransigence over the substance of the matter and willingness to negotiate over its form, for the sake of appearance'.⁴²

As for the Italian government, Pietromarchi believed it should prepare for a Summit conference by promoting a policy of *détente* towards the Soviet Union while it was still in time: only if it could persuade the Kremlin of its favourable attitude would Italy be accepted inside the exclusive club of world powers. Thus he recommended to his government to act swiftly, clear the ground of all the embarrassing obstacles inherited by World War II and re-establish a climate of mutual trust: presenting itself to Moscow as an understanding and friendly government, which could become a *trait d'union* between East and West, was the necessary precondition for being admitted to the future Summit.

In order to play this role Pietromarchi believed it was necessary to verify the validity of some assumptions within a very short time, because the crisis over Berlin had impressed a sudden acceleration to the usual tempo of international diplomacy. First of all, the strategy of *détente* with Moscow could not be developed by the ambassador himself, but merely interpreted by him: in other words, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs should be united in advocating its necessity and firm in believing in its implementation. The ambassador and his Ministry, however, were not always on the same wavelength, and as we have seen there were other Italian institutions which wanted to have a say in the country's Russian policy, from the president of the Republic to the prime minister. Whenever he was back in Rome, Pietromarchi's schedule always included a meeting with President Giovanni Gronchi, with whom he found himself in almost total agreement. Thus when in early December 1958 he was summoned to Rome for a top secret meeting of all the ambassadors posted behind the Iron Curtain, Pietromarchi used that meeting to stress Khrushchev's longing for peace, and then went to the Quirinale Palace and championed the need for Italy to play a clarifying and mediating role – a role which should be played 'in the utmost secrecy' and that should aim 'at finding out the Soviet intentions on German unity, on disarmament and on the Middle East'.⁴³ And later, in April–May 1959, when he was back in Rome for a talk with the new Foreign Minister, Giuseppe Pella, he did not miss the opportunity to visit Gronchi and harshly criticise Adenauer, who had taken a sterile position of absolute intransigence 'without facing the Soviet manoeuvre with any counter-manoeuve and without taking into his own hands – as the leader who should have had the strongest interest in negotiating – the thread of the Allied counterproposals'. Perhaps, Pietromarchi concluded with a hint of malice, 'Adenauer's rigidity was the effect of a senile arteriosclerosis'.⁴⁴

His Roman trip in the Spring of 1959 had been solicited by the ambassador himself with an initiative that sheds some light on the key aspects of his personal strategy. At the end of March the Soviet vice-minister of Foreign Affairs, Zorin, had stressed to Pietromarchi his country's interest in cooperating with the European countries, had foreseen a very long preparation for the Summit conference, and declared his government's intention to include in the negotiations the most important European countries.⁴⁵ Excited at the idea of a resurrection of 'the concert of the European powers', Pietromarchi rushed to write to Rome and stress the need for Italy to arrive at the appointment in the best possible conditions: Moscow would uphold an Italian application to the conference only if the grounds for their bilateral relations had been cleared by all the obstacles and the policy of *détente* with the Kremlin had really moved forward. In his own journals he noted: 'it's been four months already since I last received any instructions, even if I have requested them almost every week, either in formal reports or in personal letters to the Minister. Clearly in Palazzo Chigi *non si sa che pesci pigliare*.' Pietromarchi asked Pella to be authorised to make some gesture of goodwill, but the minister replied that Italian public opinion was not prepared for it. Not easily deterred, the ambassador wrote to Rome trying to 'insinuate the doubt that the Russians would oppose our participation to the Summit because of our hostile position, which we defend so stubbornly'.⁴⁶ It would be the failure of Pella's policy, since he has staked everything on it. 'Since I was posted here I foresaw what is happening, namely that we would insist to participate in a Summit conference and that we needed time to normalize our relations with Russia – he annotated in a rather disheartened mood – but everybody has been so shortsighted as not to notice this necessity. Even Fanfani did his best to maintain a very rigid position.'

This time Pietromarchi's warning had an impact, albeit only temporarily. At the end of April 1959 his position was partly accepted: both the director general for Political Affairs of Palazzo Chigi, Straneo – with whom, incidentally, Pietromarchi had a rather strained relationship – and Pella himself authorised him to make a gesture of goodwill towards the Soviets by entering into a negotiation for a cultural agreement and by granting the commercial credits Moscow had been requesting for some time. 'The Minister wants me to contact the Soviet government as soon as possible and make clear to them that on the issues to be discussed Italy intends to maintain a balanced and moderate position, which can play a clarifying role.'⁴⁷ The hope of harnessing Soviet support for an Italian participation to the Summit conference, however,

was shortlived: the debate on the installation of the Jupiter missiles was resumed in very violent tones shortly after Pietromarchi's meeting with Pella and forced the ambassador to stop the negotiation he had barely started, making it almost impossible to secure a Soviet support for the Italian application to join the preparatory meetings to the Conference.

Italian diplomacy, on the other hand, was far from being unanimous in supporting the policy that Pietromarchi advocated so warmly, and did not share his belief that Italy had to be included in the global negotiations at all costs. In a conference in Frankfurt-on-Main held at the end of May 1959, the ambassador in Bonn, Pietro Quaroni, openly declared that 'this was a duet between America and Russia, and the European countries do not matter; Great Britain, France and Germany were the satellites of the United States'. Pietromarchi found that 'the thesis had some value, but Italy should not insist on it, since its main beneficiary would be only the Soviet Union ... Quaroni does not share the interest in participating to the Summit conferences. His refrain is that Italy does not count.'⁴⁸

In the following months, Pietromarchi would relentlessly persevere in his efforts to work for a *détente* in Italy's relations with the Soviet Union, with the mixture of successes and failures we have tried to highlight in the previous paragraph. He firmly believed that the fact that Italy's political weight did not grant her a seat at the Summit was no justification for a supine and passive policy, and he warmly supported Gronchi's trip and Mattei's commercial initiatives.⁴⁹ His confidence in a negotiated solution of the German problem, however, was probably misplaced and might have cost him his post: when he was finally replaced, in March 1961, his successor Straneo told a French diplomat in Moscow that 'Pietromarchi était coinçé avec M. Khrushchev abandonnerait, le moment venu, la RDA. L'insistance qu'il avait mise à essayer d'amener son Gouvernement à partager sa manière de voir avait été une des raisons de son rappel.'⁵⁰

Fanfani's Moscow trip and the Wall

Pietromarchi might as well have been recalled for a certain naïve obstinacy in recommending a *détente* with the Kremlin, but the policy he suggested was not abandoned. Surprisingly enough, it was Fanfani – who in late 1958 had openly stated that Italy should take a very cautious attitude on the crisis – who picked up the pieces of Pietromarchi's strategy and tried a startling initiative on his own.

Back in power at the end of July 1960, Fanfani imposed a renewed dynamism to Italian foreign policy. On the German issue, there are clear signs that already by the end of 1960 he was thinking that it was necessary to resume the initiative without waiting for a new Soviet move, and that the West should propose a Summit conference to deal not only with Berlin (for which Fanfani was probably toying with the idea of a change of status for the Western rights of occupation) but also with disarmament and security issues.⁵¹

Fanfani also welcomed the election of John F. Kennedy as a leader who might reinvigorate a rather faltering Atlantic alliance, and was looking forward to the chance of coordinating his own foreign policy with him. When Averell Harriman visited Rome in March 1961 to present the strategy of the new administration, Fanfani repeatedly expressed his approval of what he heard and the two agreed that very soon the Italian prime minister would be invited to Washington to meet with the new president. The trip took place in June 1961, shortly after Kennedy's dramatic Vienna meeting with Khrushchev, and the two leaders found themselves on the same wavelength on almost every issue, including Berlin.⁵² During the conversation on Berlin, in particular, Fanfani insisted that the Italian opinion was 'very firm indeed' on this issue and then privately told Kennedy that he would understand if the US, the UK, France and the Federal Republic reached a decision secretly and then informed other Allies, while in a separate conversation Foreign Minister Segni repeated the customary Italian objection that his country would not be bound by any decision taken without her being consulted.⁵³

In light of the above, and of the importance that Fanfani attached to maintaining a good relationship with the new US president, what happened afterwards is rather surprising.⁵⁴ In early July 1961 the pro-Communist Roman daily *Paese sera* published an article revealing the striking news that Prime Minister Fanfani was about to announce his impending trip to the Soviet Union. Shortly afterwards the Italian Foreign Ministry confirmed to the main Western ambassadors that Fanfani had been invited by the Soviet government to an official visit, and that he was inclined to accept the offer.⁵⁵ A few days later the prime minister tried to blame the Soviet embassy for the leak, but the suspicion lingered that he had engineered it in order to face the State Department with a *fait accompli* and prevent any American attempt to stop his trip.⁵⁶

The State Department, as a matter of fact, was not utterly pleased with the news: Secretary Rusk believed that the Soviet invitation was

strictly related to the raising tension over Berlin and that it aimed at generating the impression that the Italian government did not share its allies' concerns about the gravity of the new Soviet diplomatic offensive. To Rusk, the invitation was a clever ruse to divide Italy from its allies or, at the very least, to soften its position on the eve of a new major international crisis.⁵⁷ He asked the US ambassador in Rome, G. Frederick Reinhardt, to represent his concerns to Fanfani as soon as possible and to inquire if it would not be possible to postpone the visit to a time when the Berlin issue had been removed from the agenda.⁵⁸ Reinhardt, however, found Fanfani firmly committed to go to Moscow: the prime minister told him that he had to make the trip for a number of reasons, but above all to demonstrate to Italian public opinion that the government had taken all possible steps to avoid a crisis. In any case he promised that he would try to delay his trip for as long as possible.⁵⁹

Fanfani's firm intentions and his reference to his domestic problems persuaded the US not to take a position of overt opposition to the trip: on 17 July, the US State Department authorised Reinhardt to tell the Italian prime minister that if he really regarded this trip as necessary, the sooner it was done the better.⁶⁰ Rusk also repeated that the only advice he could give Fanfani was to tell Khrushchev once more how dangerous were his pressures on Berlin.⁶¹

Clearly Fanfani's trip would enable him to present himself to the Italian public as the man who had tried his best to keep open all channels of communication with Moscow at a time when the international situation was taking a turn for the worse. Such a position, as many noted almost immediately, was very close to the role envisaged by the Italian socialists for the foreign policy of a centre-left government, which should try above all to promote a *détente* between the blocs. By accepting the Soviet invitation, therefore, Fanfani killed two birds with one stone: he seemed to regain for Italy an important role at a time when his country's freedom of manoeuvre was seriously hampered by the impending crisis, and at the same time he encouraged the gradual *rapprochement* between the PSI and the DC.⁶²

Fanfani's talks in Moscow took place between August 3 and 5. Khrushchev's behaviour seemed to confirm the expectations of those who anticipated a Soviet attempt to weaken Italy's Western ties on the eve of a renewed diplomatic offensive over Berlin, since he submitted Fanfani to an emotional roller-coaster of blandishments and threats. One day the Italian prime minister would be received by a Soviet economist whose library conspicuously displayed Fanfani's economic writings, while another day Khrushchev would draw a crude map of Italy revealing the

country to be a prime target for a Soviet nuclear strike in case of war – as Khrushchev duly explained, this was made inevitable by the fact that Italy hosted nuclear missiles clearly aimed at Soviet territory.⁶³

Aside from Khrushchev's more theatrical performances, most of his talks with Fanfani focused on Berlin. The Soviet leader repeated almost obsessively his intention to solve the Berlin problem once and forever by signing a separate peace treaty with the DDR, boasting his confidence on Soviet nuclear superiority over the US and repeatedly uttering all sorts of threats against US nuclear bases in Italy. Fanfani, in turn, probed his host searching for any possible gap which might revitalise the chances of a negotiation over Berlin and invited him not to take any unpredictable risks; he also made clear, however, that if things turned out for the worst Italy would firmly support its allies. From these three days of protracted diplomatic skirmishes Fanfani came away with the clear-cut impression that there still was a serious chance to reopen a fruitful negotiation on the German problem.⁶⁴

Once back in Italy, he hastened to inform Kennedy about this impression, stressing his belief in the opportunity to open negotiations as well as in the necessity to maintain a low profile on the rearmament adopted by the Western countries. This last measure, in particular, was necessary to ease Khrushchev's position, since Fanfani believed that the Soviet leader was already under the intense pressure of his military to keep a stronger line on Berlin.⁶⁵ Fanfani recommended a mix of caution and willingness to negotiate also to Chancellor Adenauer and to Secretary Rusk, both of whom he saw shortly after his return. Rusk, however, seemed to believe that none of the statements made by Khrushchev during his talks with Fanfani contained any substantial innovation compared to his previous declarations, and that there were no particular openings that could lead to a successful and fruitful negotiation.⁶⁶ Ambassador Reinhardt came up with a similar conclusion after being briefed on the talks by the director general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Fornari.⁶⁷

Even if none of his recommendations were heeded, Fanfani could still console himself with the good publicity his trip had produced for himself: the international media stressed his firm pro-Western stance during the conversations in Moscow, and his supporters quickly worked on this success to build up his image.⁶⁸ From the domestic point of view, moreover, the trip spurred an important initiative from Nenni, who openly expressed a positive evaluation of Fanfani's conduct – thus bringing the Socialist party one step closer to open support for the government.⁶⁹

From a more substantial point of view, however, the trip had no impact on the solution of the Berlin issue, and Fanfani was actually smitten by the fact that nobody seemed to pay attention to his suggestions to negotiate. When a few days later the East Germans began setting up the first roadblocks to separate East and West Berlin, his disappointment increased even further. In their early reactions to the erection of the Wall, however, Italian diplomats seemed to regard what was going on as something which should not cause too much concern among the Western Allies – and that above all should not lead to any hasty decision. As Ambassador Quaroni explained to the British Foreign Office, the Italian government felt that the worst had yet to come and that therefore it was important to avoid any dramatic reaction while keeping open the chance of a dialogue.⁷⁰ Besides, the government was fully aware that any high profile on this issue could exacerbate a domestic political situation which was already extremely tense.

For all these reasons, the Italian government did not release any official declaration about the building of the Wall until early September. It was only then, under the dramatic impact of the Soviet declaration to interrupt its moratorium of nuclear testing, that the Italian government officially expressed its disapproval of 'the unilateral Communist decisions about Berlin and of the grave announcement about the reprise of Soviet nuclear testing'.⁷¹ After debating the issue within his cabinet, Fanfani wrote to Khrushchev warning him that these Soviet unilateral steps would seriously hamper those negotiations which at the time of their meeting he had reason to believe could still be possible. He also concluded, however, that he believed there still were enough margins for improving the relations between the blocs.⁷²

Fanfani's trip had a rather bizarre epilogue when the Italian press reported a strange declaration attributed to the prime minister, which seemed to imply that the main responsibility for the erection of the Wall did not lie with the Soviets but with the Allies, who had refused to follow his suggestions to negotiate; and even if his office denied that Fanfani ever mentioned these words, the suspicion remained that his real thinking was very much along those lines. Furthermore, Fanfani used a private, unofficial channel to send Kennedy a copy of a letter he received from Khrushchev in late August, raising some perplexities in the State Department for this unorthodox behaviour.⁷³

Coming as it did shortly before the construction of the Wall and the interruption of the moratorium of Soviet nuclear tests, Fanfani's Moscow trip turned out to be little more than a mere gesture of goodwill. It took place, moreover, when the dust raised by the conclusion of

the Soviet-Italian trade agreement of the previous autumn had not completely settled, and many observers believed there was a logical continuity between the two episodes. Rather than pointing at the Italian desire to play a larger role in the international arena at this critical juncture, many observers saw these two episodes as the result of the growing influence of a dangerous 'neutralist' trend in Italian foreign policy caused by the constant need of the DC to attract the consensus of the Socialist left.⁷⁴ The State Department's Italian Desk gave a more negative appraisal of Fanfani's trip: Fanfani's dialogue with the Soviets had been 'harmful', it had generated much confusion and had distracted Italian public opinion from the need to face any Soviet move with serious military preparations. On the other hand, any open US criticism could cause a cabinet crisis and weaken Italian support for the Western position on Berlin, which meant that for the time being it was better for the US not to voice any further comment on what happened.⁷⁵

A more balanced conclusion was reached by Ambassador Reinhardt, who concluded that Fanfani really believed that it was in the general Western interest to open a serious negotiation on Berlin as early as possible, but that at the same time he was also exploiting the situation for his own domestic purposes: by emphasising the gravity of the international situation, he might have been trying to reduce the chances of a cabinet crisis, and by launching an appeal to negotiate he was probably appeasing the widespread Italian desire to remove the threat of a crisis, a desire which was particularly intense among the Italian left.⁷⁶

Conclusion

Several years of constant pressure and many efforts at enhancing the country's international standing in one way or the other had not achieved any remarkable result, nor did Italian manoeuvres affect the outcome of the Berlin crisis, since most of the country's Western partners displayed a limited interest in the quality of the information and of the suggestions advanced by Rome. Nevertheless, it would probably be unfair to conclude with a strong criticism of Italian diplomacy during the Berlin crisis not only because it operated under rather difficult domestic constraints, but also because in fact Fanfani's suggestion to reopen a negotiation with Moscow was eventually followed by the US, which in the autumn of 1961 – after the dramatic confrontation at the Friedrichstrasse – quietly went back to try finding an agreement with Khrushchev over Berlin. Italian foreign policy during the Berlin crisis

also heralded a new phase in the country's post-war diplomacy: from then on, with the experiment of opening to the left finally under way, Italian foreign policy would be strongly influenced by the new centre-left majority and repeatedly try to play the role of the mediator in many an international dispute, from Vietnam to the Middle East.

Notes

1. As the documents of the Italian Foreign Ministry have not been declassified for the period after 1957, for this essay we had to rely on what has been made available in other public and private Italian archival collections and on published sources such as journals and memoirs. We made ample use, of course, of American, French and English records – both published and unpublished. Both authors claim a joint responsibility for the content of the essay: for the sake of copyright, however, Leopoldo Nuti was mostly responsible for sections 2, 3 and 5, while Bruna Bagnato was responsible for section 4.
2. Which explains why, for instance, by 1952-53 the issue of Trieste had become such a crucial one for Italian foreign policy. For a vivid presentation of the Italian predicament *vis-à-vis* its leftwing critics, see Letter from the Ambassador in Italy (Luce) to the Secretary of State, 31 August, 1956, in *FRUS, 1955-1957*, Vol. XXVII, *Western Europe and Canada*, pp. 378-80.
3. On 'neo-Atlanticism' see Alessandro Brogi, *'Ike' and Italy: The Eisenhower Administration and Italy's 'Neo-Atlanticist' Agenda*, paper presented at the Conference US and Italy 50 years after the Marshall Plan, Rome, March 1998. See also A. Brogi, *L'Italia e l'egemonia americana nel Mediterraneo* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1996).
4. Egidio Ortona, *Anni d'America*, vol. 2, *La diplomazia, 1953-1961* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1986), pp. 234-9.
5. Dispatch from the Embassy in Italy to the Department of State, 24 March, 1957 (Conversation During Visit of Vice-President Nixon), in *FRUS, 1955-1957*, Volume XXVII, *Western Europe and Canada*, pp. 406-07.
6. The full episode is narrated in detail in Leo Wollemborg, *Stelle strisce e tricolore. Trent'anni di vicende politiche tra Roma e Washington* (Milano: Mondadori, 1983). Wollemborg also includes a copy of Gronchi's letter: L. Wollemborg, *Stelle, strisce e tricolore*, pp. 586-9.
7. Memorandum of Conversation between Secretary of State Dulles and Foreign Minister Martino, 1 May, 1957; Telegram from the Embassy in Italy to the Department of State, May 29, 1957, both in *FRUS, 1955-1957*, Volume XXVII, *Western Europe and Canada*, pp. 409-10, p. 416.
8. E. Ortona, *Anni d'America*, vol. 2, *La diplomazia*, pp. 278-88.
9. See for instance Telegram POLTO 2287 from Paris to the State Department, 30 January 1958, in National Security Archive (hereafter NSA), collection of SD files related to NATO (740.5); Office Memorandum from Elbrick to Reinstein, 'Four Power Working Group on German Reunification', 21 February 1958, in NSA; Berlin Crisis Collection, doc. # 0098.

10. For the Zoli letter, see State Dept. Memo, 11 April 1958, in DDRS, 1993, # 0826.
11. Pella's appeal in Telegram from Secretary of State Dulles to the Department of State, 5 May 1958; the communiqué in Footnote 2 to Telegram from the Delegation at the North Atlantic Council Ministerial Meeting to the Department of State, 6 May 1958; both in *FRUS, 1958-1960*, Volume VII, Part 1, *Western European Security and Integration*; *Canada*, p. 337, 338.
12. During the Summer of 1958, Italian diplomats discussed the chances that under the new leadership of general de Gaulle France would try to set up a tripartite directorate inside NATO, an event which – as is well known – eventually took place in September of 1958 eliciting a most vehement Italian response: for the Summer 1958 debate, Daniele Caviglia, *De Gaulle e il tentativo di spostare l'asse politico europeo: il piano Fouchet* (PhD Dissertation, University of Florence, 1999), pp. 190-2; for the Italian reaction, see E. Ortona, *Anni d'America*, cit., p. 322-5; Memorandum of Conversation (The President, The Acting Secretary, The Italian Ambassador, Mr. Jandrey): 'Representations of Ambassador Brosio to the President re. de Gaulle letter, 6 October 1958, in National Archives Washington (hereafter NAW) RG59, CDF 1955-1959, box 3155, 740.5/10-758. Obviously the French move heightened the traditional Italian sensitivity to this issue.
13. Memorandum of conversation, 2 December 1958, in NAW, RG84, Classified Rome embassy files 1956-58, b. 1, f. 320 Italy 1958; for the meeting of the ambassadors from the Eastern Capitals, see below.
14. Memorandum of Conversation, 26 January 1959, in NSA, Berlin collection, doc. n. 672.
15. See above, pp. 155-62.
16. For the attempt to take advantage of the deployment, see Tel. 2480 from Rome (Zellerbach) to State, 27 March 1959, document released through the FOIA; Memo of Conversation, 31 March 1959, and Telegram from the Delegation to the Foreign Ministers Meeting to the Department of State, 13 July 1959, in *FRUS, 1958-1960*, Volume VIII, *Berlin Crisis 1958-1959* (Washington: USGPO, 1994), docs. 248 and 433.
17. The French ambassador in Rome, Gaston Palewski, seemed to believe that this was actually a return of the Italians' 'natural inclination' to deliberately have two policies at the same time: 'Il semble... que, retrouvant des tendances anciennes, la politique extérieure italienne se partage en deux courants: l'un, que suit le gouvernement, de fidélité aux alliances, l'autre, qui porte M. Mattei à la coopération avec les pays neutralistes et communistes.' G. Palewski à Quai d'Orsay, n. 82/EU 'Politique de l'ENI', Roma, 15 gennaio 1959, in Archives Historiques du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères – Paris, (from now on, AMAE), Serie Z Europe 1944-1960, sous-série Italie, b.288.
18. See for instance Pella's long tirade during the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Six: *Consultation des Ministres des Affaires Etrangères des Six Pays Membres des Communautés Européennes*, '5-26 janvier, in *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, (from now on, DDF), 1960, Part 1, Doc. 35, pp. 83-4 and 85-6.
19. Memorandum of conversation, 30 September 1959, in *FRUS, 1958-1960*, Vol. VII, Part 2, *Western Europe*, pp. 538-43, in particular p. 540; Memorandum

- of Conversation, 1 October 1959, *ibidem*, pp. 556-8; Memorandum of conversation, 2 October 1959, *ibidem*, pp. 567-70.
20. Tel. 1139 from Ankara (Warren) to SecState, 6 December 1959, in NAW, RG 59, CDF 1955-59, b. 3615, f. 765.001/1-258, 765.001/12-659; telegram from the Delegation to the North Atlantic Council Ministerial Meeting to the Department of State, 2 May 1960, in *FRUS, 1958-1960*, vol. IX, *Berlin Crisis 1959-1960*; *Germany: Austria*, p. 367.
 21. On Pietromarchi's role see above, pp. 162-7.
 22. The US Embassy believed the initiative had come from a journalist close to Gronchi: FSD 879 from Rome to the Department of State, 'President Gronchi's Visit to the USSR, 6-11 February 1960', 16 March 1960, in NAW, RG 59, CDF 1960-1963, box 1916, 765.11/3-1660.
 23. Kozyrev discussed Gronchi's intention with the Italian ambassador in Moscow, Pietromarchi, at the end of October 1958: Archivio Storico della Fondazione Luigi Einaudi, Fondo Luca Pietromarchi (from now on, FLP) quaderno n.1, note of 25 October 1958 (from now on, cited under the number of each *quaderno* and the date of the journal's note). Representative of the Western Diplomatic Corps in Rome were also well aware of Gronchi's ambitions: see for instance Gaston Palewski à Quai d'Orsay, n.1895/EU, Roma, 17 December 1959, in AMAE, série Z Europe, 1944-60, sous-série Italie, b.294.
 24. FSD 879 from Rome to the Department of State, 'President Gronchi's Visit to the USSR, February 6-11, 1960', 16 March 1960; Tel. 2133 from Moscow to the Secretary of State, February 13, 1960; Tel. # 2533 from the Secretary of State (Herter) to the Embassy in Rome, February 15, 1960; Tel. # 2900 from Rome to the Secretary of State, 15 February 1960; Tel. # 2554 from State to Rome, February 16, 1960; Tel. # 2941 from Rome to State, 17 February 1960, all in NAW, RG 59, CDF 1960-63, b.1916, 765.11/2-1360, 765.11/2-1560, e 765.11/2-1760. See also Dispatch no. 20 from the British embassy in Moscow, 13 February 1960: PRO, FO371/153310; and a long semi-official memorandum on the visit handed by the Italian Ambassador in London, Zoppi, to the Foreign Office, on 23 February 1960, *ibidem*.
 25. On the trip and its impact see L. Nuti, *Gli Stati Uniti e l'apertura a sinistra, 1953-1963. Importanza e limiti della presenza americana in Italia* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1999), pp. 394-402.
 26. Memorandum of Conversation, 12 July 1959, in *FRUS, 1958-1960*, vol. VII, Part 2, *Western Europe*, doc. 240; Telegram from the Delegation to the Foreign Ministers' Meeting to the Department of State, 13 July 1959, in *FRUS, 1958-1960*, vol. VIII, *Berlin Crisis 1958-1959*, doc. 433.
 27. Editorial Note, in *FRUS, 1958-1960*, vol. IX, *Berlin Crisis 1959-1960*; *Germany: Austria*, p. 269.
 28. Memorandum of Conversation, 18 January 1960, in *FRUS, 1958-1960*, vol. IX, *Berlin Crisis 1959-1960*; *Germany: Austria*, p. 269.
 29. Luca Pietromarchi, *Il mondo sovietico* (Milano: Bompiani, 1963), p. 5.
 30. Prof. Bagnato is editing the unpublished version of the journals, under an agreement with Ambassador Pietromarchi's heirs and with the Luigi Einaudi foundation, where the journals are stored.
 31. FLP, quaderno n.1, note of 6 October 1958.
 32. FLP, quaderno n.1, 20 October 1958.
 33. *Ibidem*.
 34. FLP, quaderno n.1, 13 November 1958.
 35. See for instance FLP, quaderno n.3, 12 March 1959.
 36. FLP, quaderno n.1, 13 November 1958. Since the beginning of his mission, Pietromarchi believed that the frequent exchange of views with his other Western counterparts could somehow compensate the dearth of contacts with Soviet officials: quaderno n.1, 4 October 1958. Such meetings were frequent indeed, in particular with the US and the West German ambassadors.
 37. FLP, Quaderno n.1, 13 November 1958.
 38. FLP, quaderno n.3, 12 March 1959.
 39. FLP, quaderno n.3, 12 March 1959.
 40. FLP, quaderno n.3, 27 March 1959.
 41. *Ibidem*.
 42. FLP, quaderno n.2, 4 December 1958.
 43. FLP, quaderno n.2, 3 December 1958.
 44. FLP, quaderno n.3, 6 May 1959.
 45. FLP, quaderno n.3, 28 March 1959.
 46. *Ibidem*.
 47. FLP, quaderno n.3, 3 May 1959.
 48. FLP, quaderno n.3, 27 May 1959.
 49. It is not entirely clear, however, to what extent Pietromarchi was informed of the substance of the negotiations that led to the economic agreement of October 1960.
 50. Archives d'histoire Contemporaine - Fondation Nationale de Sciences Politiques, Paris, Fonds Maurice Couve de Murville, dossier 7: correspondance 1958-1964, Lettera di M. Dejean, Moscou, a Couve de Murville, 21 février 1962.
 51. Entretiens franco-italiens de Rome, 26 novembre 1960, in DDF, 1960, Part.2, doc. 232, in particular pp. 642-5.
 52. On the Kennedy-Fanfani talks, see L. Nuti, *Gli Stati Uniti e l'apertura a sinistra*, cit., pp. 358-69.
 53. Tel. 3558 from Dept. of State to American Embassy Rome, 15 June 1961, in NAW, RG 59, Conference Files, b.255, f. CF 1912; Memorandum of conversation between President Kennedy and Italian PM Fanfani, 12 June 1961, in *FRUS, 1961-1963*, Vols. XIII/XIV/XV, Microfiche supplement, *Western Europe: Berlin*, doc. n. 67.
 54. Unless one wants to follow Khrushchev's interpretation, namely that Fanfani acted with JFK's secret approval: while Fanfani was still in Moscow, in fact, Khrushchev declared to the Conference of the First Secretaries of the Socialist countries that Fanfani pretended to have come by his own initiative, but that he had really been pushed by Kennedy - without telling Rusk. This could be explained, according to Khrushchev, with the fact that inside his own administration Kennedy represented a different faction from his secretary of state: in any case, Khrushchev said to the first secretaries that it could not have been the Soviet government to extend the invitation, since in such a delicate moment this would have been tantamount to an open display of its own weaknesses. Conference of First Secretaries of Central Committees of Communist and Workers parties of Socialist countries for the exchange of views on the questions related to preparation and conclusion of German peace treaty, 3-5 August 1961. We want to thank Hope

Harrison for having provided us with her full copy – in English – of this document. Part of the document has been published, with a commentary by Vladislav Zubok, in *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* #3.

55. This was the opinion of the British ambassador in Italy: Rome (Sir A. Clarke) to the FO, 13 July 1961, in PRO, FO371/160668/CJ.103138/1(A).
56. Fanfani's attempt to blame the leak on the Russians: Telegram from the Embassy in Italy to the Department of State, 15 July 1961, in *FRUS*, 1960-1963, vol. XIII, *Western Europe and Canada*, pp. 812-14. For the Roman rumours: Conversation with Leo Wollemborg, in JFKPL, Robert H. Estabrook Papers, f. Diary Notes Europe, 3/8/62-3/15/62.
57. Rusk's opinion: Department of State to the Embassy in Rome (Tel. # 35), 7 July 1961, in JFKPL, Papers of President Kennedy, NSF: CO: Italy, box 120, folder Italy General 7/1/61-8/31/61. The same opinion was expressed by the Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry, Cattani, to Sir Ashley Clarke: Rome (Sir A. Clarke) to the FO, 12 July 1961, in PRO, FO371/160668/CJ.103138/1, and was shared by the *Foreign Office: Jacket Minutes*, 14 July 1961, in PRO, FO371/160668/CJ.103138/1. Foreign Minister Segni, predictably, gave to Reinhardt the impression of being 'not too happy' about the visit: Footnote n.1, p. 812, in *FRUS*, 1960-1963, vol. XIII, *Western Europe and Canada*. As for the new Italian ambassador in Moscow, Straneo, he too displayed little enthusiasm for the visit and seemed to regard it as a Soviet manoeuvre to weaken the West before a new offensive: Moscow (Sir F. Roberts) to the FO, 15 July 1961, in PRO, FO371/160668/CJ.103138/1(c).
58. Department of State to the Embassy in Rome (Tel. # 35), 7 July 1961, in JFKPL, Papers of President Kennedy, NSF: CO: Italy, box 120, folder Italy General 7/1/61-8/31/61.
59. Telegram from the Embassy in Italy to the Department of State, 15 July 1961, in *FRUS*, 1960-1963, vol. XIII, *Western Europe and Canada*, cit., pp. 812-14. The gist of the talk between Reinhardt and Fanfani can also be found in *Memorandum of Conversation* (M. Claude Lebel, French Embassy; William L. Blue, William E. Knight, Phillip H. Valdes) Subject: Italian Matters, 18 July 1961, in NAW, RG 59, CDF 1960-1963, 765.00/7-1861, box 1918.
60. Footnote 2, p. 814, in *FRUS*, 1960-1963, vol. XIII, *Western Europe and Canada*. The same concept was repeated to Ambassador Fenoaltea: *Memorandum of Conversation* (The Secretary, Ambassador Fenoaltea, Mr. William L. Blue), Subject: Consultation and the Fanfani Visit to Moscow, 17 July 1961, in NAW, RG 59, CDF 1960-1963, 765.00/7-1861, box 1918, [also in *FRUS*, 1960-1963, vol. XIII, *Western Europe and Canada*, pp. 814-17].
61. Tel. 244 from the Dept. of State to the Embassy in Rome, 27 July 1961, in NAW, RG 84, Rome embassy CF 1959-61, b.4 f. Italy 1961.
62. Rome (Sir A. Clarke) to the FO, 13 July 1961, in PRO, FO 371/160668/CJ/103138/1(A). See in particular what was said by Minister Gonella to Reinhardt, in Tel. 339 from Rome to the SecState, 29 July 1961, in NAW, RG 84, Rome Embassy CF 1959-61, b.4 f. Italy 1961.
63. The first episode was told by Wollemborg, *Stelle, strisce*, cit.; for the second, Pierre Salinger to President Kennedy (eyes only), 8 August 1961, in NSA Berlin Documents Collection, # 2276.

64. Verbale dei colloqui tra il Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri dell'Unione delle repubbliche Socialiste Sovietiche Nikita S. Chrusciov e il Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri della Repubblica Italiana Amintore Fanfani, colloqui del 2, 3, 5 agosto 1961, reproduced with a commentary by Gianluca Azzoni, 'La missione di Fanfani a Mosca (2-5 agosto 1961)', in *Storia delle relazioni internazionali*, vol. 9, n.2 (1993), pp.169-226. The document reproduced was found by Dr. Azzoni in the archives of the former SED in Berlin.

65. Pierre Salinger to President Kennedy (eyes only), 8 August 1961, in NSA Berlin Documents Collection, # 2276.
66. Memo from Tyler to the Secretary of State. Subject: Visit of the Italian Ambassador at 4:45 p.m., 31 July 1961, in NAW, RG 59, CDF 1960-1963, b. 1918, f. [...]. For the Rusk-Adenauer talks, see Memorandum of Conversation (Secretary of State, Amb. Dowling. Mr. Brown; Chancellor Adenauer, Dr. Von Brentano, Mr. Weber), Subject: Review of Paris Ministerial Consultations, 10, 1961, in NSA, Berlin Documents Collection, # 2279.
67. Tel. 162 from Rome to the SecState, 7 August 1961, in NAW, RG 84, Rome Embassy CF 1959-61, b.4, f. Italy 1961.
68. See the remarks by Congressman Victor L. Anfuso in *Congressional Record*, Appendix, A6110, 7 August 1961, and his letter to Fanfani: Victor Anfuso to A. Fanfani, 8 August 1961, in Center for Migration Studies, Staten Island, NY Papers of Victor Anfuso, Subgroup II, Papers pertaining to Anfuso activities as a US congressman, 1955-1962, box 13, f.132 (Italy, correspondence, letters sent 1958, 1961-1962). Adlai Stevenson also expressed his congratulations to Fanfani: Stevenson to Fanfani, 9 August 1961, in Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, Adlai Stevenson Papers, selected Correspondence, box 831, folder Fanfani, Amintore, 1961; and a similar positive evaluation was expressed by the Foreign Office: Moscow (Sir Frank Roberts) to the Foreign Office [No. 1458], 5 August 1961, in PRO, FO371/160668/CJ103138/4.
69. P. Nenni, *Gli anni del centro-sinistra*, 12 agosto 1961, p. 187.
70. Memoire of a conversation between Mr. Godber, [Minister of State] and Ambassador Quaroni, 18 August 1961, in PRO, FO 371/160670/CJ/1051/7. Per la prima reazione dell'ambasciata italiana a Washington, cfr. Memorandum of Conversation (ambassador Fenoaltea, Mr. Foy D. Kohler, Mr. August Velletri), Subject: Berlin, 14 August 1961, in NSA, Berlin Documents Collection, # 2298.
71. Riunione del Consiglio dei Ministri, 1 settembre 1961, in ACS, Verbali delle riunioni del Consiglio dei Ministri.
72. D. Korn to Mr. Navez, Copy of Fanfani's letter to Khrushchev, 23 September 1961, in NAW, Record Group 59, Central Decimal File 1960-1963, box 1918.
73. Letter from Prime Minister Fanfani to President Kennedy, 26 August 1961, in *FRUS*, 1960-1963, vol. XIII, *Western Europe and Canada*, pp. 818-19. Cfr. anche Tel. 693 from Rome (Reinhardt) to SecState, 29 August 1961, in NAW, RG 59, CDF 1960-1963, Box 1918; Memo of conversation (Petrone-Capano, Tyler), 'Premier Fanfani's Communication to President Kennedy', 30 August 1961, in NAW, RG 84, Rome embassy CF 1959-61, b.4, f. Italy 1961; Tel. 630 from the State Dept. (Rusk) to Rome, 3 September 1961, in NAW, RG 59, CDF 1960-1963, box 1918; Tel. 661 from Rome to the

SecState, 6 September 1961, in NAW, RG 84, Rome embassy CF 1959-61, b.8, f. 350 Berlin situation 1961.

74. FSD 199 from Rome to the SecState, 'The Berlin Crisis: Italian Attitude', 6 September 1961, in NAW, RG 84, Rome embassy CF 1959-61, b.8, f. 350 Berlin situation 1961.

75. Tel. 767 from the Dept. of State to the Embassy in Rome, 7 September 1961, in NAW, RG 84, Rome embassy CF 1959-61, b.8, f. 350 Berlin situation 1961.

76. Rome (Reinhardt) to the Secretary of State, 31 August 1961, in JFKPL, Papers of President Kennedy, NSF: CO: Italy, box 120, folder Italy General, 9/1/61-9/20/61. Memorandum for the Secretary of State, 'Effect of Internal Politics on Italian Diplomacy', 1 September 1961, documento ottenuto tramite il FOIA.

9 Three Hats for Berlin: General Lauris Norstad and the Second Berlin Crisis, 1958-62

Gregory W. Pedlow

The crisis begins

After learning of Nikita Khrushchev's 10 November 1958 announcement that the Soviets wanted to turn over their functions in Berlin to the East Germans, a move designed to undermine and ultimately eliminate the position of the Western Allies in Berlin, General Lauris Norstad - NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and US Commander in Chief Europe (USCINCEUR) - directed his staff to gather all available information on Allied troops in Berlin and their legal obligations in the event of a Soviet or East German attack or incursion in Berlin.¹ Then on 14 November the sense of crisis deepened when the Soviets detained a US convoy from Berlin for eight and a-half hours. General Henry I. Hodes, Commander of US Army Europe (USAREUR), proposed testing Soviet intentions by sending another convoy from Berlin and - if it was also detained - using force if necessary to extract the personnel and equipment. Norstad supported this proposal and relayed it to the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). Convinced that the convoy incident was a 'deliberate probe' by the Soviets, Norstad believed that if the Allies waited too long to react, they would 'run the danger of seeming to recognize a *de facto* state of blockade'.²

Although initially sympathetic to Hodes' and Norstad's proposal, the JCS were convinced by the State Department on 17 November to withhold their approval because the idea did not have Allied support and thus might leave the US isolated on the issue and because 'an attempt to push through now would be the wrong time and probably the wrong issue'. Norstad was frustrated and told his political adviser, Raymond L. Thurston, that something strong should be done or the West would be 'nibbled to death'. If a strong approach was not acceptable, however,