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THE CATHOLIC-COMMUNIST DIALOGUE IN ITALY: 1944 TO THE PRESENT

City University of New York

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THE CATHOLIC-COMMUNIST DIALOGUE IN ITALY:
1944 TO THE PRESENT
by
ROSANNA MULAZZI GIAMMANCO


A dissertation submitted to the Graduate
Faculty in Sociology in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University
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1986

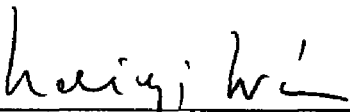
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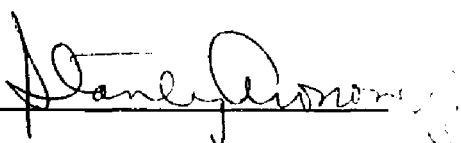
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date


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Abstract

THE CATHOLIC-COMMUNIST DIALOGUE IN ITALY:
1944 TO THE PRESENT

by

Rosanna Mulazzi Giammanco

Adviser: Professor Bogdan D. Denitch

The Italian Communist Party and the Italian Roman Catholic Church are universalistic movements having simultaneously an institutional reality. Both realities attempt to influence the "soul," or at least the political allegiance, of a common population. Hence there is a struggle for cultural hegemony as a means of reaching, reinforcing or maintaining political power. This intensified since 1944 when the PCI became a legal, constitutional mass party.

Both institutions are subject to similar dynamics with respect to their need for increased or continued legitimation, for maintenance and expansion of their respective spheres of hegemony, and for their vision of leading Italian society. They are also subject to similar dynamics with respect to their receptivity and flexibility to the population's responses to their initiatives and internal changes, and to changing social realities.

Initiated by the top hierarchy of both institutions, the dialogue can be best understood as an attempt to establish and maintain the reciprocal recognition of the legitimacy of both

institutions. The institutions neither envisaged nor welcomed a "fusion" of their respective ideologies. Since an ideology legitimates the existence, role, and function of an institution, fissures in the ideology would weaken their legitimacy.

The dialogue, however, has been found to be a symptom of disintegrating tendencies in the cultural and political hegemony of the Party and the Church. Further, it contributed to hasten and deepen these tendencies. It damaged, rather than aiding, both institutions' quest for hegemony. At the institutional level the dialogue failed, but at the grassroots level it resulted in many believers making a "class choice," i.e. rejecting the traditionally Catholic Christian Democratic Party. This meant that the dialogue loosened the grip of the Church on its followers. Those who made a "class choice" partly gravitated towards the PCI, but mostly helped form new left, anti-institutional and extra-parliamentarian political groups.

The dialogue itself can't be understood apart from dramatic social transformations occurring since 1944 that significantly altered Italian class composition and stratification. These social changes threatened the acquired positions of power of both institutions. An attempt at controlling changing social reality, the dialogue partially succeeded and partially failed.

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critique, especially concerning the finer points of Marxian thought. I owe particular gratitude to Prof. Frank Rosengarten for the patient attention and commitment with which he followed this study, and for his generous advice and critique, especially concerning the Italian Communist Party and the Gramscian heritage.

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INTRODUCTION

A Christian-Marxist dialogue is a reality in traditionally Catholic countries such as Italy, France, Spain, and the countries of Latin America. Italy, however, bears a unique relation to the Roman Catholic Church and to Roman Catholicism, given the temporal power and the cultural hegemony the Church has exercised in that country from the times of the Edict of Constantine (A.D. 313). An anti-clerical tradition has also been important in Italian politics since the times of the Risorgimento. The development and spread of Marxism is also unique in Italy since the Italian Communist Party is the strongest mass Communist party in the Western world. The PCI still officially designates itself as Marxist-Leninist. Mostly through the Party's efforts, a Marxian Weltanschauung has penetrated practically all levels of Italian life, attaining some levels of cultural hegemony which compete with traditional Catholic culture.

In Italy therefore, one can speak not so much of a Christian-Marxist dialogue as of a specific Catholic-Communist dialogue, in which both institutions play pivotal roles. The term "dialogue" is itself problematic. Introduced by Vatican Ecumenical Council II in the early 1960s, the term has been appropriated by the Italian Communists, the new left and by dissenting Catholics

As far as the PCI is concerned, it is fair to say that its overall approach to power since 1944 has been a search for a dialogue with the Catholic masses and their institutions. Specific political applications of this approach are the Italian way to Socialism, Eurocommunism, the "historic compromise" and democratic alternative strategies. While the initial approach may have well been initiated at the behest, or at least with the approval, of the Soviet Union's Communist Party, its specific development was a function of the endogenous, national conditions underlying the dialogue.

The political and strategic reasons for the intellectuals of the Church opening up to the PCI may well be different from those of the PCI. At various times and by various groups, the term 'dialogue' has been used to signify the following: openness to an exchange of ideas; cultural debate; collaboration on specific political programs; and--more ambitiously--the attempt to fuse and integrate both Weltanschauungen.

This study takes its point of departure from the specific historical character of both the Roman Catholic Church and the Italian Communist Party. It then focuses on their dialogue within the context of Italian post-World War II social reality.

While the PCI has from 1944 on sought a policy of collaboration with church believers, from 1949 on the Church

maintained an edict of excommunication (never formally revoked) against those who vote for Communist or Socialist parties or who sympathize with their doctrines. The dialogue became widespread only during the 1960s and 1970s following Vatican Council II. At the same time dramatic changes in the structure of society occurred as a result, among other factors, of increasing industrialization, urbanization, and the coming into being of a late-capitalist, mixed-economy welfare state.

The recent rise of new social movements such as the women's, student, new left, peace, anti-militarist, ecological movements, a revival of labor radicalism, left-wing terrorism, and the appearance of grassroots Christian communities will be examined with respect to the relations among these upheavals of traditional society, especially the effect it may have had on the dialogue and the two institutions (the PCI and the Church). One of the main thrusts of this study is the possible role of the dialogue as an instrument of mediation between the Church and the PCI in their efforts to keep pace with people's changing attitudes and perceptions as a result of the indicated changing social realities.

Initiated by the top hierarchy of both institutions, the dialogue can be best understood as an attempt to establish and maintain the reciprocal recognition of the legitimacy of both institutions. The institutions never envisaged nor welcomed a "fusion" of the respective ideologies. Since an

ideology legitimates the existence, role and function of an institution, fissures in the ideology create a weakening in the legitimacy of each institution.

These observations are only a background to an analysis of the shifts in cultural hegemony that have occurred in Italy since 1945. In this respect, the dialogue--the partial reciprocal recognition of the legitimacy of both institutions--may be a symptom of disintegrating tendencies in the cultural hegemony of both the Party and the Church. Further, the dialogue may have hastened these tendencies. It may have damaged, rather than aided, both institutions in their respective quests for cultural (and therefore political) hegemony over Italian society.

By cultural hegemony, in Gramscian thought, is meant the process of creating "organic" intellectuals who, working for an institution, project both a quality of moral leadership (beyond the obvious quality of political leadership) as well as the ability to set the agenda of political-moral discourse for the country. For Gramsci, the Party, as the Modern Prince, was called by a historical conjuncture to supplant the Christian world view with the Marxian world view: to bring about a political, social, cultural and moral unification of Italy, thus performing for Italy the same function that the religious Reformation movement had had in Northern European countries.

In his concept of hegemony Gramsci included, generally

speaking, Lenin's purely political understanding of hegemony as the dictatorship of the proletariat which is possible only with the alliance and consent of other classes. But Gramsci specified that this dictatorship of the proletariat had to be prepared by a cultural and ideological struggle. Thus the locus of the struggle shifts, and the consent aspect of dominance, instead of purely force, becomes paramount; it is in civil society that an alternative hegemony must take shape. This study will appraise the Italian Communist Party's understanding and application of what Gramsci means by hegemony.

The high point of the historical period being investigated is from Vatican Council II (1962-1965) to the assassination of former Premier Aldo Moro (1978). It is in this period that the dialogue is most intense and it is in this period that we witness the decomposition of some of the key ideological concepts of both institutions, especially the Party changes. As a result, both institutions have lost some of the key intellectuals through whom they had established and maintained their cultural hegemony.

Sociologically, the question emerges as to how two institutions so similar and yet so different as the PCI and the Church could each, through similar processes, take steps towards the other.

Politically, for many Catholic groups, organizations and individuals the dialogue resulted in a "class choice." The term "class choice" (scelta di classe) was coined in the

mid to late 1960s by those Catholic groups and individuals who rejected traditional Catholic social doctrine (as exemplified by Leo XIII's encyclical Rerum Novarum [1889]) since, they argued, it provided an inadequate analysis of social ills. Social doctrine, as presented by the Church-- they argued--is characterized by a theory that denies that a structural conflict of classes exists. Those Catholics who adopted a Marxian analysis claimed, in the spirit of praxis, that they had made a coherent political choice. By "class choice" they meant their decision to join or support parties that, traditionally, claim to represent the interests of the working class: most notably, the PCI. Up to that time, these groups and individuals had been for the most part politically aligned with the Christian Democratic Party (DC) in the practice of collateralism. The term "collateralism" (collateralismo) is used in the relevant literature to describe several Catholic organizations (most notably, AC, ACLI, CISL, FUCI). Founded by the Vatican, these organizations' primary function was to maintain the political unity of Catholics regardless of class through their electoral support of the Christian Democratic Party. The practice still allows the DC to dominate Italian politics and, indirectly, endows the Church with a continued political influence. Those Catholics who made the "class choice" thus rejected inter-class collaboration based on Catholicism as the principle of identification and unity, in favor of identification with a party that claimed to lead the working classes.

The study is centered around the following specific questions:

How does a Church deal with the fact that a significant proportion of its followers also embraces points of view that seem to directly contradict its theological, political and social traditions

How does a political party deal with a Church with seemingly opposed points of view, that culturally dominates society and commands the loyalties of many of its followers or potential followers

How do both institutions react to changing social realities and to emerging social movements and political groups. What are the degrees and modes of flexibility of both institutions in answering new criticisms, claims and needs

What specific quantitative and qualitative (ideological) changes are occurring in Italy since 1944

How does a medium-size Catholic labor organization such as ACLI (Italian Christian Workers Association) deal with the same social forces. How do the dynamics of the dialogue affect its evolution

What does it mean for the PCI, the Church, and ACLI to "dialogue." Is it the PCI's attempt to transcend the Catholic world view? Is it the Church's attempt to keep pace with changing social realities so as not to lose its foothold as the hegemonic, cultural and moral originator?

Is it ACLI's 1969 decision to end collateralism? Did any specific collaboration on common projects take place between these institutions?

In the dialogue as it developed at the intellectual level in journals, what Marxist assumptions penetrated the Catholics' arguments and how exactly was a lived religious faith accepted by the Communists. Was there an attempt at fusing both ideologies? If so, was it valid intellectually? And, what were the reactions by followers of both principals to the course of the dialogue

Finally, can the rise of new social movements and political groups be in any way imputed to dissatisfaction with the dialogue? What are the dynamics of the dialogue between these new groups as related to the PC, to ACLI and the Church.

The fundamental assumptions of the Marxist Weltanschauung as specifically elaborated and interpreted by the Communist Party, and the fundamental assumptions of Catholic social doctrine and Catholic ideology in general as elaborated and interpreted by the Church will necessarily be examined. For example, both the coming of the Kingdom of God and the coming of Socialism mean the end of the world as we know it; and in both world views the poor, sick and oppressed are burdened with a special historical meaning. For both, history is the locus where, alternatively, God manifests itself and where a Socialist consciousness develops and comes

to fruition.

While it would be presumptuous to give any definitive judgments on both world views, some conclusions will be drawn on whether the dialogue has resolved or increased the tensions between them. Also, as to whether the dialogue has resolved, changed, or increased the tensions between Marxism and the PCI's interpretations of it, and Christianity and the Church's interpretation of it. Our conclusions may, hopefully, be generalizable to other cultures.

Other evaluations which may be extrapolated in terms of wider social significance are:

The dialogue may be a symptom of the disintegrating tendencies of the monolithic aspects of both institutions

The theoretical assumptions both institutions would have to renounce to resolve these tensions

How central are these assumptions to the Church's and the Party's understanding of, respectively, Christianity and Marxism

What are the realistic possibilities of concretely resolving these tensions

The dialogue may have introduced elements in both world views that are hastening the disintegration of both institutions in terms of their hegemony on culture. That is, it may have damaged rather than aided the institutions' quest for ideological (and political) supremacy.

CHAPTER I

ANTONIO GRAMSCI AND THE CATHOLIC-COMMUNIST DIALOGUE:
THE CHURCH AND THE PARTY'S STRUGGLE FOR HEGEMONYPresenting the Issue: the "Catholic Question"

A study of the Catholic-Communist dialogue in Italy from 1944 to the present must begin by analyzing the thought on religion and the Church of the most influential Italian Communist thinker and revolutionary, Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937). Gramsci's heritage in shaping the political philosophy and strategy of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) and his contribution to developing conceptual tools to understand cultural hegemony in modern society is weighty and complex. While he is recognized outside of Italy as the most innovative Marxist thinker after Lenin (according to Eric Hobsbawm, Gramsci is "probably the most original Communist thinker produced in the twentieth century West,")¹ the first thinker to innovatively apply Marxian categories to the study of one specific society, this political and theoretical heritage is perceived in a complex and ambiguous way by the Italian left. There exists now some general minimal agreement in the relevant literature that Togliatti's and later Berlinguer's PCI have simplified and flattened--presumably in good faith--and perhaps even distorted, Gramsci's thought. This is especially true of the mature work of the

Quaderni.²

This chapter aims to cast light on the phenomenon of the dialogue between the PCI and the Italian Catholic world³ from the point of view of Gramsci's analysis of religion and the Roman Catholic Church during the Risorgimento and the pre-fascist and early fascist period. After a brief review of the literature, I will present my working hypotheses. Then I will review the PCI's treatment of the Gramscian analysis of the historical, ideological and political aspects of the Church as the reality around which Gramsci developed his concrete revolutionary strategy. I shall present what I understand as Gramsci's own evaluation of the Catholic question and of Catholic ideology from the point of view of his "philosophy of praxis." Finally, I will offer some reflections on the PCI and the Church as, simultaneously, political institutions, universalist "churches," and culture-forming, maintaining and dispensing bodies that struggle to attain cultural predominance over Italian society.

A Brief Review of the Literature

In "The Varying Seasons of Gramscian Studies" Alastair Davidson points to the different approaches to Gramsci on the part of the PCI in relation to the party's political evolution.⁴ According to Giuseppe Fiori, as far back as 1929 Gramsci disapproved of the Third International's new policy. This policy, formulated at the 1929 Tenth Plenum of the Comintern, equated, in brief, Democratic Socialism with Fascism. The new policy argued that the overthrow of the

bourgeoisie must be immediately followed by the "dictatorship of the proletariat" without any intermediate bourgeois-democratic phase. In the light of this image of Fascism, all Communist parties must--it further argued--cease any system of alliances such as a popular front. The popular front alliance was, in fact, argued for by Gramsci just before his arrest in 1927. According to Fiori, Gramsci

. . . judged that some bourgeois-democratic solution was a more probable immediate alternative to fascism. And such a diagnosis implied that a popular front strategy embracing all working-class and even republican forces was necessary for the overthrow of fascism, preferably under the hegemony of the working class and guided by the communists.⁵

In line with the International's directives, the PCI expelled several key people including Alfonso Leonetti, the novelist Ignazio Silone, Pietro Trezzo, Paolo Ravazzoli. These switches in party line and their implementation made Gramsci too much the "dissenter." While Walter Adamson doubts Fiori's contention that Gramsci would have almost certainly been expelled as an "opportunist" or at least harshly condemned for his dissent, Adamson's reasoning is that, hating "fractionalism," Gramsci would not have carried his dissent that far.⁶ But all this is speculation. The Party did not publish the Quaderni (Gramsci's notebooks, written in prison between 1929 and 1935, under conditions of extreme physical and psychological duress) until eleven years after his death, a confirmation of their enormous and "uncomfortable" political significance. And whatever interpretation one wishes to give to Togliatti's decision not to forward Gramsci's 1926 letter to the USSR CP's Central Committee,

undoubtedly, had the letter been delivered, the USSR Communist Party would have placed enormous pressure on Togliatti to expel Gramsci as well.⁷ Davidson argues that Gramsci's conversations with Piero Sraffa in 1936-1937, his skepticism concerning the "confessions" in the Moscow purge trials that were then beginning in the USSR, "made him too much of a heretic."⁸ The Quaderni partially foreshadow the Communist Party's 1950s move towards "polycentrism," its 1960s critique of Comintern, Cominform and Third International policies and, according to Davidson and Franco Ferrarotti among others, they contain the seeds of the much later to arrive theory of "Eurocommunism."⁹ According to Norberto Bobbio,

. . . After Italy's liberation from fascism, Gramsci was considered the man who had inspired the policies of the PCI and his works, the Quaderni especially, were treated as a sort of canonical text for the strategy of the Italian workers' movement in the period of transition . . . This fed a literature of political polemic rather than a dispassionate study of the Quaderni.¹⁰

According to Emma Fattorini, Togliatti claimed that the PCI was faithfully following in Gramsci's footsteps. This caused a "canonical, hagiological" reading of Gramsci. After Togliatti's death and the refusal on a part of the left of Gramsci's thought (a reaction, according to Fattorini, to the hagiographic treatment he had received on the part of the PCI), there has emerged for the first time a fresh approach to the Gramscian opus.¹¹ According to Lorenzo Bedeschi¹² one can distinguish three different stages in the PCI's handling of the Gramscian heritage:

Gramsci from 1943 to 1956 was interpreted by

Togliatti as a saintly figure and little or no dispassionate analysis of his works was undertaken

After the XX Congress of the USSR CP, the publication of Togliatti's Yalta Memorial and the PCI's evolution towards autonomy from the Soviet Union, Gramsci was (1956-1975) "discovered" by Marxist intellectuals, especially following the publication of Fiori's biography (1965) and John M. Cammett's ground-breaking study (1967)¹³

From 1975 to the present, Gramsci's contributions to Marxist theory and strategy have been again reevaluated. The PCI still claims it follows in its day-to-day strategy the Gramscian vision of the actions of the "Modern Prince" (the Party as conceived by Gramsci). Adamson calls these PCI intellectuals who claim to be his followers "Gramscians of the right."¹⁴

At a January 1985 symposium on Togliatti held by the PCI, Alessandro Natta, the Party's Secretary General, still maintained that Togliatti's "partito nuovo" (new party) was fully Gramscian in inspiration, the only difference being that the party does not aim to become "an ideological-political totality, a prefiguration of the State." At the same symposium Nicola Badaloni, a Communist philosopher, similarly maintained that "Togliatti's national way to Socialism, his theory of polycentrism, and his call for a dialogue with Catholics . . . are inspired by Gramsci."¹⁵ There is however a crucial difference between a mass party conceived as a consensus party that aims to share power in a bourgeois

representative system by allying itself with a center, inter-class party such as the Christian Democratic Party (DC) and a mass party that, beyond representative politics, aims to be an "ideological and political totality." Ironically, PCI left wingers and the new left in Italy also claim a Gramscian heritage in criticizing Togliatti's party and Berlinguer's theory and strategy of "historic compromise," that compromise proposed in a brief 1978 inter-class, inter-party alliance with the DC in order to share government power. These left wingers are called by Adamson "Gramscians of the left."¹⁶

According to Bedeschi--a left Catholic--the theoretical foundations of Togliatti's "Italian way to Socialism" and of Berlinguer's theories of Eurocommunism and historic compromise cannot be attributed to Gramsci since these three strategies impliedly acknowledge the values of political and ideological pluralism contained in a liberal-bourgeois political order. Bedeschi argues that Gramsci enriches but does not substantially alter the Leninist conception of the state and of the party. He argues that hegemony, as Gramsci understood it, does not ultimately leave any space for pluralism. In translating and applying Lenin to the West, the Modern Prince "takes the place, in consciousness, of the divinity or of the Categorical Imperative in developing a new conception of the world."¹⁷ (Italics mine). Thus the party gains total value and power over all of civil society. This is substantially a fair interpretation of the scope of the

party as envisaged by Gramsci, provided one makes a distinction (which Bedeschi does not make) between a "totalitarian" and a "totalizing," i.e., universalistic, party. A "totalitarian" party is a Stalinist-model party: it snuffs out, ultimately by force, any dissent within and without it. It allows the existence neither of other parties nor of inner-party factions. A "totalizing" party on the other hand is a party that aspires and works towards a hegemonic influence to set the moral tone of political discourse as well as the limits of such discourse, as a "director, elaborator and conqueror of hegemony, as an apparatus of 'spiritual government.'"¹⁸ Apart from the clear distinction between a Stalinist party and Gramsci's conception of the party as one that works towards achieving moral or cultural hegemony over civil and political society, Gramsci's party is also clearly distinguished from Lenin's conception of the party in that Gramsci's was to be a mass party, not one of revolutionary élites, as was Lenin's conception.

Hypotheses

The foregoing all too brief review cannot settle the issue of whether the PCI is the Modern Prince of the Quaderni or whether PCI intellectuals are Gramsci's "organic intellectuals." It merely points out the great complexity and ambiguity in the PCI's treatment of the Gramscian heritage. This ambiguity is especially present with reference to dialogues with the Catholic world. It is discon-

certing that the PCI made little or no mention of Gramsci's writings on this subject when the Party first called for a dialogue in the concluding months of the war, nor did it mention Gramsci at the height of the dialogue in the 1960s and 1970s. It was the Catholic side who through their arguments in favor of a "class choice" evoked Gramscian notions of human nature, religion and hegemony.¹⁹

And yet, paradoxically, Gramsci's interest in religion and the Catholic Church spans his whole writing career from the Scritti Giovanili to the mature reflections of the Quaderni. I suggest that one of the reasons why the PCI did not seriously study and publicize these writings is that an extended analysis of them would not have been conducive to opening up a dialogue with the Church and forming political alliances with still devout Catholic masses. The PCI did control studies and publications of Gramsci through its Gramsci Institute which held the original prison manuscripts until the complete 1975 edition. If Bedeschi is correct in claiming that the theories of Eurocommunism and historic compromise cannot be attributed to Gramsci because they presuppose the acceptance of a pluralistic party system, then the whole project and strategy of the dialogue could not be legitimated by citing Gramsci. This argument can be made stronger when one reflects that Gramsci's project of the Modern Prince as the carrier of a Marxian Weltanschauung was specifically to carry out an intellectual and moral reform that would involve all of society. It would introduce a new Weltanschauung. In

Gramsci's words,

. . . a new construction [of society] can only spring from below, with the participation of a whole national stratum--the lowest economically and culturally--to a radical historical event that would invest the whole life of the people and brutally make one face one's own responsibilities. . . . The method of freedom must not be understood as "liberal freedom."²⁰

If the PCI and the Church can be considered as functioning at the same time as political parties and as universalistic institutions, each aiming to win over the loyalty of the same population, and if both institutions are persuaded of the historical necessity and inevitability of their exclusive role and presence (although their conceptions of history are markedly different), then instead of a "dialogue" we would have a struggle for cultural dominance. Whatever both institutions' other claims may be, neither, as absolute advocates, could carry forward secular, laic or liberal movements. Both would want to radically transform all of society rather than compromise with other sectors of it.

For the purpose of examining the dialogue in post-World War II Italian society, some specific questions come readily to mind if there is to be a dialogue:

1. How does a church deal with the fact that a significant proportion of its followers also embrace points of view that seem to directly contradict its theological, political and social traditions

2. How does a political party deal with a church that espouses seemingly opposed points of view and which culturally dominates society and commands the loyalties of many of the party's followers or potential followers

3. How do both institutions react to changing social reality and to emerging social movements and political groups. What are the degrees and modes of flexibility of both institutions in dealing with these new needs, claims and criticism.

Gramsci's analysis of the Church's struggle against modernist tendencies among its intellectuals and of its struggle against liberal-bourgeois ideology (as well as against the workers' movement in the pre-fascist era) can be a useful guide in trying to answer these questions as they relate to Italy after 1944.

In this later period, the question emerges as to how two institutions so similar and yet so different as the PCI and the Church could each, through similar processes, even begin to take steps toward the other. From this point of view, the dialogue might be seen as a symptom of the disintegration of claims to monolithic powers in both institutions. Further, the dialogue--once started--may have introduced elements into both world views that may have weakened both institutions' separate quest for ideological supremacy. In the light of this possibility one could argue that while the political purpose of the dialogue was, at least on the part of the PCI, to come to some kind of political accommodation with the Church and to share in the management of power ultimately through an explicit alliance with the Christian Democrats, the dynamics of the dialogue itself could have resulted in--or at the very least, were

accompanied by--a radical critique of, and political disaffection within the two institutions respectively on the part of some Marxists and some Catholics who then went on to form small new parties on the left, new social groups and radical grassroots but still Christian communities.

The Communist Party's Use of Gramscian Analysis of the Catholic Question

According to Tommaso La Rocca,²¹ a Catholic engaged in the dialogue, only since 1977 has there been an interest by the PCI in the religious question as covered in Gramsci's writings; and, at that, it was only a scant interest. At the Third Congress on Gramscian Studies organized by the Gramsci Institute and held in 1977, there were only two papers on the issue. One was by Gabriele De Rosa and the other by Giuseppe Galasso. Neither are Communist, and none of the papers, according to La Rocca, seriously analyze what Gramsci had to say on the relationship of the Modern Prince to the Church. And neither discussed the relationship of both Weltanschauungen to each other. To date, the only book-length treatments on the question are by the French Marxist scholar Hugues Portelli (1974), and by the non-leftists Carlo Vasale (1979) and Egidio Masutti (1975).²² None of these works, however, deal with Gramsci's analysis of the Church and Catholicism. By that time the dialogue was already a reality in Italy, France and in several

Latin American and Eastern European countries. The dialogue was most thorough in Italy where it engaged broad and extensive participation by individuals clearly committed to the Church, the DC, and the Communist Party. Both the Church and the PCI directly participated in it through their official publications L'Osservatore Romano, Civiltá Cattolica, L'Unitá, Rinascita and Critica Marxista.

Gramsci, says La Rocca, favored an alliance of the industrial workers with other classes such as peasants and the lower middle class, but he never favored an alliance with other bourgeois parties. The latter "would noticeably slow down the development of the revolutionary process." Just as Gramsci excluded any form of collaboration of the Socialist Party (PSI) and the Communist Party with the Partito Popolare Italiano (PPI) before the advent of Fascism so, contends La Rocca, the current strategy of historic compromise would not fall within a Gramscian "war of position" strategy.²³ Similarly, Gramsci never favored the 1929 Concordat signed between the fascist state and the Church. He saw that it--on one hand--was a reassertion of "medieval theocracy" on the part of the Church, and on the other hand it was the state's abdication of essential roles it ought to play in civil society, namely of consolidating and maintaining ideological hegemony. But Togliatti, avowedly to avoid "religious strife," did vote in 1947 for Article 7 of the Constitution which substantially incorporated into the Constitution the 1929 Concordat. In 1984 the PCI

voted for a revised Concordat that substantially maintains the privileged position the Church enjoyed under the previous one.

According to La Rocca, a political alliance by the PCI with the DC and top-level agreements with Church hierarchy would run counter to the Gramscian analysis of the "Catholic question" in terms of "class struggle" and of superiority of Marxian over Catholic ideology. The Catholic left (especially the Christians for Socialism, grassroots religious communities, CISL left and ACLI left) and the post-1968 new left, who tend towards loosening the ties among the Catholic social bloc were, in spirit, criticized by Gramsci. Yet they tend towards addressing the Catholic masses with an analysis and a strategy of class struggle. They thus reject the monopolization of the dialogue on the part of both institutions.²⁴

The Catholic left has affirmed its autonomy from the Church and from the Christian Democratic Party because of the latter's positions on the divorce and abortion referenda of recent date, and through their votes in support of the PCI and new left parties. These parties they were instrumental in joining together and founding, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, along with the "Manifesto Group" (who split from the PCI in 1969), and other Communists who were dissatisfied with what they claimed were "reformist" policies of the Communist Party.

But according to Fattorini, Catholic dissent and the sense of crisis among Catholics has been manipulated by the

Party, since the PCI favors some form of relationship with institutional Catholicism rather than with the dissenting left groups. The spontaneity and variety of ideological factions and components in the Catholic dissent have not been well accepted by the PCI, which favors more disciplined action. This has resulted in the Catholic left being abandoned to itself. Fattorini suggests that they were not allowed to be absorbed into the PCI as a critical faction, but were forced to form small splinter left parties in combination with the new left. These parties will be discussed in Chapter V. Here we merely note they are the Party of Proletarian Unity (PDUP), Proletarian Democracy (DP) and the Independent Left Group. Some leftist Catholics are also found in extra-parliamentarian groups such as Continuous Struggle (LC), Workers' Power (PO), Workers' Autonomy (AO), the Christians for Socialism (CPS), and the armed struggle nuclei.²⁵ Other Catholic dissenters formed and belong to "spontaneous" religious groups and radical grassroots Christian religious communities called "base communities" (CDB). Catholic religious dissenters are also found in the peace, ecological, anti-militarist groups. They act as veritable pressure groups on the PCI on issues of concern to the new left and the new social movements.

Antonio Gramsci's Analysis of the Catholic Question

After Max Weber's The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Antonio Gramsci did the first extended sociological analysis of a religion and the Church in a modern

nation. Taking into account changed historical conditions and the very flexibility of Gramsci's "philosophy of praxis," I believe that a Gramscian analysis of the liberal and fascist state, i.e. of the Church at the time of the Partito Popolare Italiano can be fruitfully applied to the present state, the Church, the Christian Democratic Party in contemporary Italian society. Obviously major changes have occurred since 1945 when Fascism was defeated in Italy. These changes include the legalization of the labor movement, of left parties, a change in the form of the state itself (now a constitutional republic). In addition major gains have been made by the legalized labor movement. Yet despite the defeat of the fascist state, the relations between State and Church and the Church's role in society have not substantially changed. Even after Vatican Council II, the Church has not substantially changed its relation to the Italian state and to Italian society. A Concordat still exists, although revised and reapproved in 1984. Although Italy is now governed under a Constitution to whose writing the left made a major contribution, the state is still fundamentally governed by a liberal bourgeoisie.

Presently an advanced welfare state, Italy's economic structure is capitalist, although about forty percent of the Gross National Product is derived from state-controlled conglomerates. From a broader perspective it might be fair to say that the objective social and economic bases that sustained Fascism still exist.²⁶ These include juridical peculiarities held over from Fascism, an antiquated taxation

system, and a chaotic public administration. Furthermore, some social structures are still pre-modern. These include the still pervasive Catholic family, a political system dominated by a paternalistic client social relation, and the conception of power being that of personal prerogative. For all these reasons I feel justified in attempting to apply a Gramscian perspective to these conditions.

Gramsci's approach to religion and the Church evolved throughout his life in reaction to specific historical events as well as to the refining of his own thought. There are however certain fixed points that recur throughout his writings from his first newspaper articles to the last prison entries in the Quaderni. These can be analyzed and applied to the present.

For example, in the spirit of anti-clericalism and of left-Hegelian dialectical thought, the young Gramsci wrote that "Socialism is the religion that must kill Christianity."²⁷ Catholicism, he argued, had exhausted whatever historical and revolutionary significance it may have had in its early period and in the Middle Ages. The Marxian Weltanschauung, he felt, was the ideology that appeared historically destined to supplant it. This was a recurrent theme in the Quaderni. Yet Gramsci was among the first Marxists to break away from the dogmatic anti-clericalism of the Italian Socialist Party even before he went on to found the PCI. At the time of the development of his theory and strategy of creating factory workers' councils in 1919, he called for Catholics to enter the councils in order to create a

"new equilibrium" between the future workers' state and the Vatican.²⁸ Again while in a minority position in the newly-formed PCI, Gramsci proposed to break the stalemate of a priori, ideological anti-clericalism expressed by most PCI founders. In the Theses of Lyons, which are the fundamental theoretical positions of the PCI, Gramsci proposed an alliance between workers and peasants. In addition, that workers who were in the left wing of the Partito Popolare Italiano (PPI) should be considered as members of the working class. As such, they should be lured into switching their political allegiance to the PCI.²⁹

In the Quaderni, the resolution of what Gramsci calls the "Catholic question" becomes a political necessity in order to resolve the "Italian question." This was a pragmatic recognition that the Church commanded the loyalties of the masses, in particular the Southern lower middle classes, the Southern peasants and women. While the ideology of the intellectuals was lay-liberal (as exemplified in Croce), the Weltanschauung of the Italian masses was based on the Catholic religion.³⁰ A long-term war of position would have to be waged at the cultural level against Catholicism and the Catholic Church in order to achieve cultural and political hegemony.

Gramsci's political strategy was dictated by his sociological analysis. Here, the conception of an ideological bloc between the Church and its faithful is contrasted with that of the Modern Prince and the people. Gramsci was interested in the political-ideological formulae for an alliance between the working class and the peasant worlds, given the

size of the peasant masses. This alliance would be necessary for the success of a Socialist revolution. However the peasants, he argued, had been for millennia under the influence of the Church. The solution to the "peasant question" would then have to be searched in concomitance with a solution to the "Catholic question."³¹

In addition to the ideological domination of the peasant masses, the Church ideologically dominated all other classes with the exception of a tiny cluster of lay-liberal bourgeois intellectuals through its monopoly on all religious and most educational institutions. After the signing of the Concordat in 1929 these monopolies received state and juridical legitimation. Furthermore, with its associations such as the "white" (as opposed to the "red" or Socialist) cooperatives, and organizations such as Azione Cattolica (AC) and the PPI, the Church was attempting to dominate Italian society through political action and organizations.

Gramsci distinguished between confessional and lay religion. He defined confessional religion, following Weber, as containing the following:

1. The belief that there exist one or more personal divinities transcendent of personal and earthly conditions
2. Men's feelings of dependence upon these superior beings who are believed to totally govern men's lives
3. The existence of a system of cultic relations between men and God(s).³²

This is a substantive, rather than a functional, definition of religion. Compared to other substantive

definitions it is somewhat restrictive. It does not, for example, include Emile Durkheim's distinction between sacred and profane reality, nor Rudolph Otto's phenomenology of feelings of awe and a sense of mystery. However, it is generally agreed that no one definition of religion is wholly adequate to all social and theoretical problems, even though--or maybe precisely because--religion is such an all-pervasive, trans-historical human phenomenon. All definitions are thus somewhat deficient as they vary in salience of their main features according to value relevance or the problem of the definer. There is no agreement on a single, sharp discriminating criterion between what does or does not essentially constitute religion. A Wittgenstein-type notion of "family resemblances" is applicable here. Weber's method to explain the concept of religion by elaborating the relevant features of a typologically clear case of religion is also methodologically acceptable. For both Weber and Gramsci, Roman Catholicism was one such ideal type.

In discussing laic religion, Gramsci refers to Croce, for whom

. . . it is religion every philosophy, i.e. every Weltanschauung insofar as it has become a "faith," that is, considered not as theoretical activity (of creation of new thought) but as a stimulus to action (as concrete ethical-political activity, creation of new history).³³

Laic religion as defined by Croce cannot be considered religion in the strict sense as defined above since there is lack of cult practices and of beliefs in a personal God or gods.³⁴ For Gramsci, even pure "theism" cannot be considered a religion since it lacks cult, "a determinate relation

between man and the divinity." For Croce, "religion is a conception of the world with a morality that conforms to this conception, presented in mythological form."³⁵ For Gramsci, Christianity (Catholicism in particular) is instead a specific kind of ideology, which has added to its Weltanschauung a belief in transcendent divinities and a practice of the cult. Gramsci therefore rejects Croce's laic conception of religion and identifies religion only as the confessional type. This removes Marxism and the Modern Prince from any criticism that Croce (and Gramsci) could have made of religion and the Church. Gramsci's argument is that

. . . when religion is understood not in a clearly confessional, but in a loose, laic sense, the distinction between faith, ideology and politics becomes blurred. Why call a unity of faith between a Weltanschauung and a conforming norm of conduct 'religion' and not, instead, 'ideology' or 'politics'?³⁶

Gramsci's interest in the specific cultic practices and beliefs in the supernatural is based upon ideas and practices that legitimate and maintain the Church's ideological and political grip on society.

By characterizing some religions as including forms of ideology, and by asserting that the Church is an ideological apparatus of the state, Gramsci developed two important conceptual tools to study the historical and cultural legitimating functions of Catholicism. In addition, he presented the characteristics that Marxism would have to develop in order to substitute itself for Roman Catholicism. His interest is clear when he writes that:

. . . a conception of the world cannot call itself valid and permeate all of society and become a "faith" unless and until it can show it can substitute itself for preceding Weltanschauungen and faiths at all levels of state life.³⁷

The terms "ideology" and "Weltanschauung," image of the world, are at times used interchangeably by Gramsci, and it may be useful here to clarify their meaning and connotation. The term "ideology" does not necessarily convey a pejorative connotation for Gramsci. Rather he distinguished between "historically organic" and "arbitrary" ideologies. The former

. . . are necessary to a certain structure, have a "psychological" validity, "organize" the masses, form the soil wherein men . . . acquire a consciousness of their own position, struggle.³⁸

Arbitrary ideologies are 'rationally willed' and create only polemics and individual 'movements,' and are asserted as "dogmatic systems of absolute and eternal truths." Gramsci notes that the pejorative connotation of the term has become widely used and this has distorted a theoretical analysis of the concept.

In the positive sense, an ideology is of an educational nature, has the compact character of "'popular beliefs,' and takes on the same energies as 'material forces!'" It ought, according to Gramsci, be distinguished from theory in general and from the philosophy of praxis, of which it may be an educational, popularized condensation.³⁹ Unlike Mannheim, Gramsci grants some kind of objective validity and necessity to "historically organic" ideologies. Ideology in this connotation is more akin to what Mannheim calls a "total perspective." This positive meaning of ideology is interchangeable for Gramsci

with the term "Weltanschauung" as used by Weber and Mannheim. The following passage on the importance of maintaining ideological unity over a social bloc clarifies what Gramsci means by these terms:

The fundamental problem of every conception of the world, of every philosophy that has become a cultural movement, a 'religion,' a 'faith,' that is, that has produced a practical activity and a will in which it is retained as an implicit theoretical 'premise' (an 'ideology' we could say, if to the term ideology we give as a point of fact the higher meaning of a conception of the world that implicitly manifests itself in art, in law, in economic activity, in all individual and collective manifestations of life), is the problem of maintaining an ideological unity over the whole social bloc that is cemented and unified by that ideology. 40

Gramsci's development of a theory and strategy for achieving a socialist society in Italy brought him face to face with the dominant ideologies and ideological institutions of his time. Thus his definitions and reflections are never abstract or universal, not "philosophical" in the sense of being removed from the immediate lived world. The Gramscian theories of the Modern Prince, of political and civil society, of ideological superstructure, of ideological and historical blocs, of the organic intellectual and the role of culture, intellectuals and the party in building a new hegemony in civil society in a long-term war of position that would facilitate the ultimate seizure of power (the war of maneuver)--all take their point of departure and are developed and refined in contrast to and in opposition to Catholicism and the Church, taken as existing negative models.

The interest in Italian Catholicism, of course, stemmed from his belief that each country must develop a "national road to socialism" by an examination of the peculiar history, ideology, historical and class blocs, and other national "peculiarities" of a country. His critique and evaluation must also be understood in the light of his interpretation of Marxism as a "philosophy of praxis," and especially of his conception of the dialectical relationship between theory and praxis. It also must be evaluated in terms of his understanding of materialism as historical materialism and, in the Quaderni, of his identification of historical materialism with "absolute historicism."

In the Quaderni the philosophy of praxis is not a body of theoretical propositions linked logically together with no application or connection to life as it is lived. Nor is it a system of inductive laws based upon "data" derived from observation. The philosophy of praxis is a world view: it is supposedly man's critical consciousness of himself in his environment. The critical consciousness arises out of man's interaction with the economic, material, historical and cultural conditions and in turn gives him the tools to transform those conditions. It becomes "praxis," action informed by reflection. There is a dialectical unity between theory and praxis, each acting upon the other in the process of seizing and subjectivizing history. As in Catholicism, there is a "faith" element, a will to action, and a norm of conduct. Hence the structural similarities between Catholicism and Gramsci's philosophy of

praxis. Hence also, one can argue, there are structural and behavioral similarities between the PCI and the Church.

Unlike Marxism however, Catholicism--for Gramsci--is not a coherent complex of ideas. It is composed of different levels of cultural complexity, according to the varied social groups in which it diffuses itself. One can distinguish at least two basic levels. One is the "ideology of the intellectuals of a dominant class"; this is the cornerstone of any ideology, according to Marx as well as Mannheim. Religion, coupled with folklore and the "senso comune disgregato" (fragmented common sense) is the other level at which any world view operates. "Common sense" is by no means a unitary conception, nor does it have for Gramsci the positive connotation that it has in much of the English-speaking world. It can be called the "folklore of philosophy": a fragmented, critical, "superstitious," incoherent, inconsequential ensemble of conceptions in accordance with the social and cultural position of the masses for which it operates as a philosophy.

. . . The main elements of common sense are furnished by religion, therefore the relationship between it and religion is much more intimate than that between common sense and the philosophical systems of the intellectuals.⁴¹

This second level is found among the subaltern classes, the peasants in particular.

Religion, folklore and common sense, which together make up the subaltern masses' world view, do not thus make up a coherent body of theory. Religion itself is interpreted

differently among the different social strata according to their emotional and intellectual modes of consciousness. Thus, the inter-class unity imposed by the Church is a formal unity of theology and of cultic "magic." In Catholicism, ideology can thus be distinguished between "philosophy" (the theology of the religious intellectual caste) and a people's religion. The latter is a mixture of folklore and common sense, along with surviving sediments of older religions and ideologies.⁴²

The crucial points for Gramsci are how any ideology can be transformed from theory into a basis for practical conduct and will to action, including determining how a social bloc can gain and maintain its unity organically. Thus he is interested in the following specific questions:

The theoretical assumptions of religion

How a church controls different social groups

How a church can ideologically homogenize the beliefs of the masses and of the intellectuals.

As a practical ethic, a norm of conduct, religion can lead--generally speaking--either to an active attitude as in primitive Christianity and Puritanism, or to a passive attitude as in Italian Catholicism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁴³

For Gramsci, as for Karl Marx, religion is not necessarily the "opium of the people." It is, however, always the "heart of a heartless world": an emotional outpouring of pre-critical feelings in response to oppression. It results

from a confused, deep-seated feeling of weakness. It is therefore an expression of an unconscious state of--and dissatisfaction with--oppression.⁴⁴ Historically, religion is transformed, Gramsci argues, into a narcotic when it has exhausted its historical function. During and since the Italian Counter-Reformation, the French Revolution and Restoration, and in the fight against the modernist movement within the Church, religion became the ideological supporter of vanquished classes (the feudal aristocracy and medieval clergy). It was no longer the bearer of a potentially "revolutionary" message as it partially was under early Christianity and Puritanism. In the latter case it was instrumental, though sometimes blindly, in ushering into existence new political and social systems.

But even when Gramsci recognized a historical and educational function to religion in certain historical periods, as a "need of the spirit" and a "necessary and determined form of rationality of the world and of life," he always referred to "naïve" or popular Christianity, never to theology or "Jesuitical" Christianity.⁴⁵ In times when religion no longer expresses the needs of the masses, even the Church's social thought and practice act like a narcotic. In Gramsci's time, Catholic social doctrine was counterposed to Socialism in the official condemnation of Socialism contained in Leo XIII's encyclical Rerum Novarum. This doctrine, for Gramsci, has a

. . . purely academic value . . . it is a narcotic-like ideological element tending to maintain certain determinate attitudes of passive expectation typical of

religion. It is not a directly active element of the political and historical life . . . Not a first-priority political program required of all Catholics, it is, essentially, a polemical argument without political concreteness.⁴⁶

This social doctrine is discussed in the context of an analysis of the Catholic ideological bloc and the political arms of the Church such as the Partito Popolare Italiano. It is to be noted that in 1923 the Church for all purposes snuffed out the PPI by sending its founder and leader, Don Luigi Sturzo, into exile because, among other reasons, the party demanded concrete reforms and was opposed to the Concordat.

Throughout Italian history, the Catholic ideological bloc expressed for Gramsci the classical model of the relationship between intellectuals and the masses, between state institutions and civil institutions, and between political society and civil society. The objective of such a bloc was to maintain the cohesion of all Catholics, to avoid a fracturing of the Church into national churches as had happened in Northern Europe, and to prevent the division into different sects based upon different social classes and status groups as is the case of England and the United States. The means used by the Church was by the imposition of "formal" doctrinal and cultic unity on its institutions and members.

The greater the political power of the Church in history, the stronger was its repression of "heretics" and its subsumption and neutralization of different conceptions of Christianity. It enclosed many deviant groups in religious orders (for example, the Franciscans, whom Gramsci admired). With

the Counter-Reformation and the loss of effectiveness of the methods of the Inquisition, the Church resorted to a stricter ideological control by, among other things, instituting infant baptism, first communion at the age of seven years, and by pronouncing (in 1870) the dogma of papal infallibility. In 1950, it adopted the dogma of Mary's bodily ascension into heaven. It thus accommodated itself to Mariolatry and to women's budding demands for equality.

According to Gramsci, the Church's struggle against modernism and its efforts to maintain both the clergy and the laity under the direction of the Jesuits demonstrated its structural weakness. These repressions demonstrated as well the fact that its ideology was no longer "historically organic." Founded during the Counter-Reformation, the Jesuit order was especially powerful in Italy and had, as an additional vow, the vow of obedience to the Pope and to the organization and reinforcement of an absolute spiritual empire. While the problems of achieving unity in the midst of diversity continuously change and shift, the weakness of the Church remains. This, according to Gramsci, is indicated by the fact that the Church is no longer the sole dominant force in Italian society. It must compete with liberal and socialist ideologies. It is no longer the ideology of the dominant classes--except for the land-holding aristocracy of the South. Catholicism remains, however, the fragmented, common sense world view of much of the peasant and lower middle classes. Thus, there are objective and ideological cleavages in the relationship of the Church to a liberal-bourgeois state.⁴⁷ The medieval world, on the

other hand, Gramsci argued, offered an example of compact, universalistic political and ideological hegemony.

As mentioned earlier, the Concordat is interpreted by Gramsci as the capitulation of the Church in its struggle against the fascist state. The Church enters into an alliance with that state in order to retain its existing privileges. In doing so it helps to prevent a socialist revolution that would destroy both the fascist state's and the Church's power.⁴⁸ On the other hand, the Concordat is also the capitulation of the state to the Church. The Church attempts to share with the state in its legal control over civil society. In short, the state acknowledges by the Concordat its inability to exercise by itself an ideological hegemony and resorts to making use of traditional intellectuals for that purpose. On its side, the Church pledges to "promote the consensus among those people from whom the state explicitly recognizes [consensus] could not be obtained by its own efforts."⁴⁹ We note that the alliance of state and Church against the worker's movement was not limited to Italy. The Vatican signed Concordats with twenty-eight Western countries including, in 1933, one with Hitler's Third Reich.

Religion, Gramsci argued, not only keeps the masses in ignorance but also hinders the development of their political consciousness. Marxist parties he claims, on the other hand, develop the political consciousness and can enable the masses to overcome their traditional cultic beliefs. Gramsci considered

Christianity as a revolution that failed in Italy. Marxism is thus to be heir to the Reformation. He points to the "religious base" of the German, English and French revolutions and claims that the revolt started by Martin Luther culminates in Marx. He considers it important that one understand this connection. In Italy the Church had prevented a Reformation. Marxism therefore becomes essential as the cultural-moral promoter of a reform in the national Italian character. It is to be noted that in Italian "riforma" means both reformation and reform, it is pregnant with their political, religious, and moral connotations and Gramsci's usage generally includes all three meanings:

. . . In Italy there has never been an intellectual and moral reform ['riforma'] that involved the popular masses as had been the case with the Lutheran Reformation, with Calvinism in England, and with eighteenth century rationalism and concrete political thought (mass action) in France. . . . Crocean idealism was somewhat effective but it did not touch the masses and crumbled at the first counteroffensive. . . . Therefore historical materialism will have or will be capable of having this function, not solely a totalitarian function, as a conception of the world, but totalitarian in that it will involve all of society down to its deepest roots.⁵⁰

The question that Gramsci ultimately asks is: how can Socialism take the place of Catholicism in society at large and in the consciousness of the masses? How can it become the new common sense? Gramsci does not think religion will disappear along with a revolutionary change in economic relations. He is not a structural determinist. He thinks the struggle must be fought at the level of the superstructure, that is, at the level of ideology. A major project of Gramsci's was to remove

from Marxist philosophy what he called the rigid incrustations of both Bernstein's passive reformism and Bukharin's vulgar determinism and to inject into Marxism Sorelian and Leninist types of voluntarism.⁵¹ He saw Marxism as being the full realization of Christianity, French rationalism and German philosophical idealism. He stressed that there is no direct derivation of superstructure from the material, structural base. Rather, paraphrasing Weber, "the unraveling of causation is complex and tricky." Gramsci quoted from the Preface to the Critique of Political Economy:

It is at the level of the superstructure that men acquire consciousness of class conflicts . . . it is important to distinguish between the material overthrow of economic conditions and the ideological forms that allow men to conceive of and struggle against this conflict.⁵²

And, quoting from the Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Gramsci stressed that "even theory can be a material force, once it seeps down to the masses."

Catholic Ideology as Evaluated by Gramsci's Philosophy of Praxis

An evaluation of the Marxian and Catholic Weltanschauungen as resulting from the dialogue which flowered after Vatican Ecumenical Council II will be the central topic of Chapter V. However it is useful to present here the main points of Gramsci's philosophical position (as distinct from his political-sociological critique) and his vision of Marxism as a new laic religion. This position, a variant of classical Feuerbachian and left-Hegelian tradi-

tions, was discarded by the Communists as being historically limited. As Togliatti said in 1962, it has "failed the test of history." It is the Party's 1962 rejection of this essentially negative view of religion that opened the way for Catholics to participate in the dialogue. Conversely, it is a Gramscian humanist and processual conception of consciousness that is incorporated into post-Vatican Council II theologies of liberation.

As noted above, religion for Gramsci is an essential spiritual need but it does not result from a free, rational quest. It is an expression of an unconscious state of and dissatisfaction with oppression. Man's liberation from this unconscious feeling reflects his economic-political position and must be sought in a set of beliefs that transcends received religions. Liberation can make man become the subject in history, not a mere object of it.⁵³ Only if he considers himself as a subject can man develop his self-consciousness and realize his potential to will and act, to make history.

Born out of a deep, essential and human feeling of quest for security, received religion is an obstacle to a rational quest for security. This human quest becomes, in religion, overwhelmed by fear and a sense of mystery that may lead to resignation and passivity.⁵⁴ From a materialistic point of view, classical German idealism such as that of Fichte and Hegel is a rationalization of Christian religion. A parallel rationalization occurred when a laic ethical religion such as that of Kant and Croce, deriving from theories of natural

right and from the Enlightenment, emptied Christian religion of its traditional symbolisms. Gramsci sees a historical transcendence of both philosophical religion and ethical religion into the new world view of Marxist Socialism.⁵⁵ Gramsci evaluates received religion also as superstition, clearly evidenced in peasant folk-magical beliefs, a primitive expression of human consciousness. Although he seems to favor popular or "naïve" religion, since dogma rationalizes and kills faith, ultimately any received religious belief is the heritage of an inert past. It is anachronistic, a transitory form of culture and a mythological, mystifying conception of reality. As Vasale puts it, it is an "allusory-illusory ideology."⁵⁶

The transformation of religion into Socialism is inevitable. There is an implicit, instinctive tendency in human consciousness for overcoming the god-man dualism which will lead to the destruction of religion. Gramsci saw signs of this in the emerging forms of Christian social action of his time. These included the creation of Azione Cattolica, Catholic trade corporations, Catholic cooperatives and especially the Partito Popolare Italiano. In 1918-1920, Gramsci evaluated the PPI as expressing a Catholicism incarnated, as the expression of a structure paralleling the Church apparatus that politically organized the peasant masses. By claiming the right to secular political activity independent of the dictates of the Vatican, the PPI ultimately rejected Catholicism as the basis of political unity. In so doing it served to make Catholics

critical of the monolithic dominance by the Church. The PPI revived the masses since it created the practice of independent associations at the political level. By so doing the PPI was working towards its self-destruction for the masses, having become conscious of their strength, would see the "superiority of Socialism."

Here young Gramsci is still imbued with idealistic notions. The mature Gramsci, reflecting on defeat, saw that the mild PPI reformism made it easier for the Fascists to come to power. The PPI proved it could not defend itself (it was disbanded by the Vatican which sent Sturzo into exile in 1923, largely because Sturzo had entered into a coalition with the PSI against the fascist party). Nor could it defend the peasants though it had, however, effectively "neutralized" them by persuading them to join the PPI rather than the workers' parties.⁵⁷

In analyzing the Christian conception of human nature, Gramsci sees that it "places the cause of evil in man himself, that is, conceives of man as a well-defined and limited individual." Human nature is conceived as purely personal individuality. Christianity thus precludes any prospects for radical self-realization. To this Gramsci counterposes the Marxist conception of human nature: "man is the process, or summation, of his own actions." He is in dialectical tension with nature and with social reality. Human individuality is the "ensemble of active relations," and the human spirit is always in the making.⁵⁸

Given the social foundation of human nature, it follows that ethics can never be purely personal. They are a synthesis of the constitutive elements in social relations. The ethics of an individual may be his own, but they are not self-made. An ethic does not originate solely in the individual "conscience" but is a synthesis of all existing social relations. The synthesis cannot take place without activity that is projected towards the exterior, towards nature and towards others, i.e., ethics are made in social reality. For Gramsci, therefore, man and ethics are essentially political. Under Marxism (and under Hegelianism) human nature does not reside exclusively in the individual, but rather in human history. The concept of man as becoming is realized in history. Such a conception of "becoming" is negated in Christianity. Given the Christian a priori conception of finiteness, weakness, proneness to "sin" in human nature, man cannot remake himself.⁵⁹

Man's relationship with nature is, in the Christian understanding, a negative one: on the one hand, nature is material, objective reality while man, as "spirit," is not dependent upon nature. Reality is static, objective, fixed once and for all in the act of creation, and the relationship of man to nature is mechanically frozen. Christianity, based on these ideas, is antithetical to a dialectical interpretation of reality and to its concrete expression as praxis. For this reason, says Gramsci, religion has failed in practice. Christian theology has prevented the actual

spiritualization of the world through praxis.

Like all religions, Christianity conceives of reality as objective and independent of man. All religions have a realist theory of creation, whether of the Platonic (Augustinian) or Aristotelian (Thomist) variety: for in Christian epistemology to know is to see passively and to intuitively grasp immutable and objective realities. Thus, the standards of validity and truth are always outside of man, reside ultimately in a transcendent, absolute reality. This transcendent reality has been identified with the Christian God. Knowledge is derived from theology and from faith. Thus, in Thomist thought, "philosophia ancilla theologiae."⁶⁰ Christian faith can be maintained only by maintaining this dualism between worldly reality and metaphysical reality. The latter has dominance, being incommensurable with the former. Human principles and values are not initiated in man. Man finds them in God. For this reason, Gramsci believes, the Church will always be obscurantist. It devalues man, history and science; and it separates theory from praxis.⁶¹ Christian philosophical reflection leads not to action in the world but to "contemplation" which is held in all variants of Christian theology (except Calvinism and sects deriving from Calvinist thought) as the highest form of activity.

The philosophy of praxis turns philosophical realism upside down: one begins and ends with man. Man is a datum beyond which one can search neither for his origin nor for his end. The rest is metaphysics with a reference point.

Christian faith paralyzes man, while Marxism discovers an inner human will. Under Christianity, knowledge is contemplative; under the philosophy of praxis, knowledge arises from an analysis of concrete historical problems and it pursues the course of the solution of problems.

For Gramsci, the philosophy of praxis reduces both philosophy and religion to a humanism that is not reified. The philosophy of praxis is identified with historicism and that, in turn, with political activity. Politics has both a moral and a reforming quality. Vasale speaks of Gramsci as a "lay reformer" who was, much like Mazzini, concerned with changing the Italian national character so that individuals could become active citizens in a constitutional republic, conscious of their political rights and duties.⁶² Gramsci links the "intellectual and moral reform" to religious issues for many reasons, but primarily because he sees Marxism as the heir to the Reformation which it "surpasses, both ideologically and politically." After primitive Christianity, the Marxist reformation, Gramsci argues, will be the most radical. For Gramsci, Marxism clearly entails not only a social and a political revolution but, above all else, a cultural and a moral revolution. It will succeed where Christianity has failed: it will form a new humanity which will realize the unity of theory and praxis. Marxism

. . . does not tend to leave the "simple" people in their primitive fragmented and contradictory philosophy of "senso comune." It tends to lead humanity to a higher conception of life. . . . It affirms the need for contact between the intellectuals and the "simple" . . . in order to construct an intellectual-moral bloc which can make politically possible the intellectual progress of the masses.⁶³

This does not mean that Gramsci fails to recognize man's need for faith and for values. In young Gramsci's words,

. . . socialism is both religion and faith . . . it is the faith in man and his energies as the only spiritual reality . . . our Gospel is modern philosophy . . . It [modern philosophy, or Marxism] sees human nature as the ensemble of social relations which determines a historically defined consciousness; only this consciousness can indicate that which is natural and that which is against nature.⁶⁴

Thus moral principles are derived from the emerging historical consciousness of the times. The foundations for an ethics are given in a "critical and historical self-consciousness as a stimulus to action." It is here that the role of the organic (as distinct from the traditional) intellectual emerges. The new party intellectuals will determine the course of political action, the historical necessity towards which the party, as a "collective consciousness," emerges. The party is the new point of reference of morality and any action is conceived as being useful or damaging towards the party, a supra-individual standard of reality but not a metaphysical one since it is composed of individuals who act from within the party for the common social good.

In order that the socialist faith not reduce itself to static abstractions, Gramsci requires that party doctrine

contain moral, humanitarian and processual dimensions. Praxis is connected to faith insofar as faith opens the possibility to what man is not yet. Both the Communist and the Christian faith assert that man is primarily an actor, and that human activity is foremost in a scale of values. But the Christian path to salvation is towards a meeting with God through Jesus Christ. For Gramsci, this is a degrading, impoverishing myth.⁶⁵ Like Feuerbach and Marx, Gramsci reduces the Other to the human dimension of Mankind creating History. For Christianity, salvation is self-realized in reaching God; for the Marxist the ultimate goal is the self-assessment and salvation of humankind through historical (political) action.⁶⁶ This is in direct contradiction with the passivity that for Gramsci is co-extensive with received religion. Furthermore, while a religious ethics finds, as noted, the "moral law within the individual," this, Gramsci argues, is too fragile a foundation upon which to direct historical action. Ethical and moral principles must be understood as being embodied in a social force beyond the individual, in a "collective individual," i.e. the party, which alone can direct sound revolutionary action.

For the philosophy of praxis, as it is also true for religion, "the masses can live philosophy only as a faith." Socialism is then an integrated vision of life with a philosophy and an ethics: it is a laic religion. As such, it is nourished and maintained, in the proper historical conjuncture, by non-rational faith-like elements. For Gramsci

faith is a constitutive element in mankind. It is a guarantee of human relations as it opens human beings to creative action and to love. The object of the Communist faith for Gramsci is: "There is in history a logic which is above that of contingent facts and above the will of individuals or of individual groups."⁶⁷ The Communist utopia rests on a belief in the realm of freedom and that this realm of freedom cannot be intellectually known a priori since it has not heretofore existed. A Communist utopia, for Gramsci, founds the human "reason for being" in the moving present, in the belief that a progressive humanization is part and parcel of the historical process. This process is a movement towards freedom.⁶⁸

Political Assessments

In Gramsci's Italy, bourgeois hegemony was effected through a coalition of the industrialists of the North and large landowners of the South into a political bloc mediated by the Church. Class domination was as much exercised by consensus achieved in civil society as by political coercion. This consensus was, in large part, the result of an all-pervading Catholicism. This type of ideological domination can be effectively fought only through the creation of a counter-world view, that is, with the creation of a new "integrated culture." Without a new, independent, integrated culture, any popular revolt is destined

to be absorbed into the prevailing hegemony. It may be even channeled in the direction of reactionary populism as was later the case, for example, of Poujadism in France and of new-right religious movements in the United States and in Italy. Under these conditions a seizure of power is very unlikely to succeed unless there is a prior victory in civil society. A cultural revolution must be a prior victory in the war of position. A war of maneuver (a frontal, possibly violent attack) may or may not then be necessary to seize power, but without a cultural war of position it is most certainly doomed to failure.

A victorious outcome of a war of position would open the way for a new social and political bloc under a new hegemony. Hegemony is for Gramsci the permeation throughout civil society--including a whole range of structures and activities like trade unions, schools, churches, and the family--of an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs, and morality. That system of values is in one way or another supportive of the established order and of the class interests that dominate.⁶⁹ Hegemony creates a "social and historical bloc" of all other classes with the dominant status group or class. In Gramsci's Italy, the weaknesses of the dominant classes forced them to come to terms with the Catholic Church which had for centuries controlled the intellectuals and had, through them, given direction to civil society. Gramsci thought that a Marxist bloc could replace the Church-liberal bloc, at the proper historical conjuncture. Essential to this

project was a mass party, with organic intellectuals developing a new Weltanschauung and mediating between the party and the masses.

The long-term war of position then would resolve itself into a movement for moral and intellectual reform. It would include a clash of the two opposed world views. Resolving the "Catholic question" involved not narrowly conceived political action but ideological-cultural activity leading, if successful, to the absorption of the new world view by the masses.

If the above interpretation is substantially correct, Togliatti's and Berlinguer's attempts at a dialogue with Catholics had little to do with Gramsci's strategy. Neither do the theories of historic compromise and of democratic alternative, insofar as they are aimed at the sharing and management of power with the Catholic party, have anything in common with Gramsci's project of the Modern Prince. Rather than working for a confrontation, the Party under the dialogue seemed headed towards finding values, goals and elements that are common to both world views. Rather than a counter-hegemony, the Party seems to be working towards a place in the existing hegemony. Whatever attempt there has been at reforming the Catholic world view, it has originated from the Catholic left rather than the PCI or the political left. It may be that this is too short an historical span for a sound judgment, and that Gramsci's war of position needs, in fact, to involve several generations. It may be, on the other hand, that Palmiro

Togliatti's "partito nuovo" is not so much the Modern Prince envisioned by Gramsci, but is instead a party that fully conforms to the "rules of the game" (to use Bobbio's phrase) of a pluralistic society and has therefore put in abeyance its revolutionary thrust.

Notes to Chapter I

1. Eric J. Hobsbawm, "The Great Gramsci," New York Review of Books, 4 April 1974, pp. 39-44. Also quoted in Walter L. Adamson, Hegemony and Revolution, with a Preface by Norberto Bobbio (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), p. 2.

2. See Emma Fattorini's Preface to Hugues Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa, trans. G. Cantoni (Milan: Mazzotta, 1976). See also Norberto Bobbio's Preface to Adamson, Hegemony and Revolution. See also Tommaso La Rocca, "Gramsci sulla questione cattolica e il PCI oggi," Il Tetto, no. 101-102 (July-December 1980), pp. 481-503, and Lorenzo Bedeschi, La parabola del marxismo in Italia (Bari: Laterza, 1983).

3. By "Catholic world" I indicate a complex reality that includes a specifically religious and a specifically socio-political dimension. Various interlocutors of the PCI have been the Vatican, Church clergy, religious communities, rank-and-file believers and intellectuals, the Party of Christian Democracy (DC), groups such as Azione Cattolica (AC) and labor organizations such as CISL (the DC-aligned Federation of Italian Workers' Unions) and ACLI (Italian Christian Workers' Associations).

4. Alastair Davidson, "The Varying Seasons of Gramscian Studies," Political Studies 20 (December 1972): 448-461. See also by the same author, Antonio Gramsci: Towards an Intellectual Biography (London: Merlin Press, 1977), p. 269.

5. Giuseppe Fiori, Antonio Gramsci: Life of a Revolutionary, trans. T. Nairn (New York: Schocken Books, 1970), especially pp. 249-250.

6. Adamson, Hegemony and Revolution, pp. 97-98.

7. This letter, Togliatti's reply to Gramsci and Gramsci's subsequent reply were made public by the PCI for the first time in Rinascita, no. 17 (24 April 1970). See among the many accounts of the incident, Federico Ormea, Antonio Gramsci e il futuro dell'uomo (Rome: Coines, 1975). Ormea argues that while Gramsci was not literally expelled or suspended, there was a "real break between him and the center of the PCI."

8. Davidson, Antonio Gramsci: Towards an Intellectual Biography, p. 269.

9. For two representative accounts of this interpretation, see Davidson's works cited above and Franco Ferrarotti, "Eurocommunism, Italian Version," Eurocommunism: The Ideological and Political-Theoretical Foundations, ed. George Schwab (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), pp. 157-185.
10. Bobbio in the Preface to Adamson, Hegemony and Revolution, p. ix.
11. Fattorini in the Preface to Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa, p. 8.
12. Lorenzo Bedeschi, La parabola del marxismo in Italia (Bari: Laterza, 1983), p. 148.
13. John M. Cammett, Antonio Gramsci and the Origins of Italian Communism (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1967).
14. Adamson, Hegemony and Revolution, p. 231.
15. A collection of the papers read at the Symposium will be published by the Istituto Antonio Gramsci of Rome. For substantially similar views, see the interview to Alessandro Natta in a supplement to L'Unità, no. 244, 14 October 1984. See also Alessandro Natta, "Il PCI negli anni del centro-sinistra," and Nicola Badaloni, "Il rapporto con Gramsci: una concordia discorde," both in a special Togliatti issue of Critica Marxista, no. 4-5 (July-October 1984), pp. 19-44 and 45-68 respectively.
16. Adamson, Hegemony and Revolution, p. 231.
17. Bedeschi, La parabola del marxismo in Italia, pp. 147-148.
18. Giuseppe Vacca, Saggio su Togliatti (Bari: De Donato, 1974), p. 133ff.
19. See in particular the works of Giulio Girardi, Antonio Nesti and Ruggero Orfei.
20. Antonio Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere, 4 vols., ed. Valentino Gerratana (Turin: Einaudi, 1975), 2:816.
21. La Rocca, "Gramsci sulla questione cattolica e il PCI oggi," pp. 481-482.
22. Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa. Claudio Vasale, Politica e religione in Antonio Gramsci (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1979). Egidio

Masutti, Perché Gramsci ateo? (San Daniele del Friuli: Edizioni Grillo, 1975).

23. La Rocca, "Gramsci sulla questione cattolica e il PCI oggi," pp. 489, 482-483.

24. Ibid., pp. 499, 502-503.

25. Fattorini in Preface to Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa, pp. 21-23. Extra-parliamentarian groups are radical political groups that reject a Western parliamentary democracy in favor of grassroots democracy. They believe no substantial political reforms can be achieved through the parliamentary system. They criticize all parties, especially the PCI, which they accuse of compromise, reformism, and betrayal of its Marxist-Leninist origins. Most of these groups lack rigid hierarchical structures. They are very active culturally and are generally important opinion makers in the left. Generally, these groups--with the possible exception of Autonomia Operaia (Workers' Autonomy)--are against violent terrorist activities.

26. Franco Ferrarotti, "The Modernizing Role of the Working-Class Parties in Southern Europe," Democratic Socialism, ed. Bogdan D. Denitch (Totowa, J.J.: Allanheld, Osmun & Co., 1981), 108.

27. Antonio Gramsci, Opere, vol. 10: Sotto la Mole (1916-1920) (Turin: Einaudi, 1960), p. 148.

28. Antonio Gramsci, Opere, vol. 9: L'Ordine Nuovo (1919-1920) (Turin: Einaudi, 1955), p. 476.

29. Fattorini in Preface to Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa, pp. 9-10.

30. Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa, p. 31.

31. Ibid., pp. 29-30, 53-54.

32. Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere, 2:715. Gramsci adopts the definition given by Nicola Turchi in his Storia delle religioni (Turin: Edizioni Bocca, 1922). The definition follows Max Weber's classical definition of religion; see Max Weber, The Sociology of Religion (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1963). There are several references to Weber's works in the Quaderni del carcere; see 1:230 where he mentions Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, 2nd ed. (Tubingen: n.p., 1925). See also 2:1389 where Gramsci refers to The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism which, according to Vasale, had been translated in Italy in 1931.

33. Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere, 2:1217.
34. Ibid., 2:716.
35. Ibid., 2:1217.
36. Ibid., 2:1378.
37. Ibid., 2:1217.
38. Ibid., 2:868-869, 1489.
39. Ibid., 2:1487, 1491.
40. Ibid., 2:1380.
41. Ibid., 2:1378, 1396-1398.
42. Ibid., 3:2312-2313. For the relation between ideology, religion, fragmented common sense and folklore see also Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa, pp. 36-38.
43. Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere, 2:1389. See also Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa, p. 42.
44. Gramsci, Sotto la Mole (1916-1920), pp. 60-61.
45. La Rocca, "Gramsci sulla questione cattolica e il PCI oggi," p. 495. See also Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere, 2:1389.
46. Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere, 1:546.
47. Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa, pp. 141-145, 175.
48. Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa, p. 119.
49. Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere, 3:1866-1867. See also Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa, p. 131.
50. Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere, 1:515. For a discussion on the meaning of "riforma" see Fattorini in Preface to Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa, p. 12 and Masutti, Perché Gramsci ateo?, p. 70.
51. Vasale, Politica e religione in Antonio Gramsci, p. 44.
52. Ibid., p. 150. See Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere, 2:869-871, 1267.

53. Gramsci, Sotto la Mole (1916-1920), p. 60.
54. Ibid., pp. 212-213.
55. Vasale, Politica e religione in Antonio Gramsci,
p. 16.
56. Ibid., pp. 50, 83.
57. Portelli, Gramsci e la questione religiosa,
pp. 127-128.
58. Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere, 2:1344-1345.
59. Ibid., 2:1975, 1345.
60. Ibid., 2:1384-1385.
61. Masutti, Perché Gramsci ateo?, p. 84.
62. Vasale, Politica e religione in Antonio Gramsci,
p. 43; see also Masutti, Perché Gramsci ateo?, p. 83.
63. Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere
64. Ibid., 2:1344-1345 passim.
65. Masutti, Perché Gramsci ateo?, p. 198.
66. Ibid., p. 203.
67. Antonio Gramsci, Opere, vol. 8: Scritti giovanili (1914-1918) (Turin: Einaudi, 1958), pp. 183-184;
vol. 7: Passato e presente (Turin: Einaudi, 1951), p. 207.
68. Masutti, Perché Gramsci ateo?, p. 189.
69. Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere, 2:751-752; see
also 3:1637-1638, 2:1235-1236; 3:1591 and 3:2010-2012.

CHAPTER II

THE GRAMSCIAN HERITAGE AND THE DIALOGUE AS MANAGED BY
PALMIRO TOGLIATTI, THE POLITICAL REALIST
(1944 - 1964)Historical Background and
Methodological Indications

This chapter covers the dialogue as seen from the point of view of the Italian Communist Party from 1944 to 1964 (the year of Togliatti's death). The year 1944 marks a new era for the Party. With the Allies in Italy, the Party-- along with other anti-fascist groups--came out from underground and started organizing the war of Resistance against the Italian fascist army and the German army, now turned invader. From a tiny, dispersed, underground revolutionary organization the Party became a legal mass party. After the arrest and imprisonment of Gramsci in 1926, Togliatti had become the de facto head of the Party. He remained its uncontested leader until his death. From Moscow, Paris, Geneva and Spain where he lived in exile from 1926 to 1944, he was active publishing Stato Operaio, teaching, speaking on the Italian underground Resistance radio, and working in a high échelon position as a member of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Third International.

While the Modern Prince was a constructed ideal,

never a political reality, and although Gramsci led the Party for only five years (1921 to 1926), the "partito nuovo" (new party) is literally the creation of Palmiro Togliatti. In the history of post-war Italian Communism he is the central figure. Therefore in this chapter I will focus on the Party's approach to the Catholic question through Togliatti's writings and activity as Resistance leader, founder and editor of the Communist press, Secretary General of the party (1945-1964), government Minister (1944-1948), member of the Constituent Assembly which drew up the present Italian Constitution (1946-1947), and member of Parliament (1948-1964).

In this chapter I will also briefly cover some aspects of the Gramsci-Togliatti relationship as it refers to party structure and to the Catholic question. Like all other Communist parties, the PCI until 1956 was rigidly structured by the discipline of democratic centralism and by a strong leader. More than any other party executive, Togliatti shaped party policy. Internal dissenting lines became public and openly operative only in the late 1950s.¹ The main body of this chapter is devoted to Togliatti's policy on the Catholic question as explicitly or implicitly contained in the following:

1. The policy of a national united front, known as the "svolta di Salerno" (turn at Salerno)
2. The structure of the new party ("partito nuovo")
3. The status and function of religious belief in party members as set forth in the 1946 Party Statute and

changes made in the 1962 Party Statute. In 1979 another change was made in the Statute. It is covered in Chapter VI

4. The vote in favor of Article 7 of the Constitution concerning the Concordat

5. The reaction to anti-Communist sentiments and to clerical intolerance during the cold war, climaxed by the 1949 Vatican edict of excommunication

6. Efforts made by the Party in favor of détente and in favor of a control and reduction of atomic armaments, along with the Party's proposal for an "Italian way to Socialism" (1954-1956)

7. The function of religious faith in history, as interpreted in the 1963 Bergamo speech

8. The meaning of Vatican Council II, as interpreted in the 1964 Yalta Memorial.

Each of these points will be analyzed and discussed in terms of the ongoing dialogue and of the Gramscian heritage on the issues involved. In the remainder of the chapter I discuss the historical context of the period and the national and international constraints under which the Party operated. Finally, I will offer an assessment of the new party's approach to the Catholic question from the point of view of my assessment of Gramsci's thought.

The two interlocutors of the dialogue are the Party and the Church as upholders and propagators of two distinct world views. In specific instances I will analyze PCI's

interaction with the Christian Democratic Party (DC). One should not however identify the Catholic world and the Catholic question with the DC: the DC is only one political channel--though at times the most dominant--for Catholicism and for the expression of Church values and power. As a matter of fact, whenever the Party has identified the DC as the exclusive Catholic interlocutor there has been a lowering of the level of discourse. There have been as well accusations of political expediency from the left (both inside and outside of the Party) and from the Catholic world for what these critics consider a narrow pragmatic compression and reduction of the scope of the dialogue.²

The dialogue has thus been perceived as taking place between two universalistic, culture-forming, hegemonic institutions which also happen to have a political role. The political role, however, is not necessarily considered the essential role, but only the most expedient role or dimension of the being of both institutions. Certainly the PCI, whether in Gramsci's Modern Prince formulation or in Togliatti's or Berlinguer's versions, has always set itself up as the opposite interlocutor of the Church, not simply as the interlocutor of the DC. The PCI sees itself as a church--a counter-church if you will--and likens its creed to a religion (in Togliatti's words, "a complete religion of man"). Like the Church, it claims to have an essential historical function that

legitimizes its existence. This function is to work on behalf of the poor and the oppressed, to work towards a moral reformation of the Italian national character and of Italian social and political life, ultimately to bring about a new social order of freedom and justice where the "full development of the human being can be reached," this being "the goal of the whole of human history."³

On its part, the Church has accepted this self-definition by the Party and has responded to the challenge posed by the Party. The Church has reacted through its numerous political and social outlets. At times, right after the war when the Party was making rapid membership gains, the Church has acted directly against the Party by threatening religious sanctions. Some of these were in the form of injunctions (pastoral letters) to bishops and parish priests to warn the faithful of the dangers of Communism, likened to the Devil. Other activities included: the setting up of "Civic Committees" tied to church parishes to influence the electorate directly; pressures on organizations of the Catholic area, especially the DC and the labor movement; the 1948 sanction of "mortal sin" and, in 1949, the excommunication of members and sympathizers of Socialism and Communism and of the Communist and Socialist parties.⁴

The New Party's Approach to the
Catholic Question

As mentioned in Chapter I, during the Stalinist period the relationship between Gramsci and Togliatti was framed hagiographically, just as the Marx-Engels, Lenin-Stalin relationships were. "Nor can one think that this was opposed by Togliatti who always spoke of Gramsci as a teacher-comrade and strongly stressed the continuity of political direction from one to the other." In an article published in Stato Operaio on the occasion of Gramsci's death (1937) Togliatti recognized him as the "leader and theoretician" of the Party. Apart from Felice Platone, Togliatti was the only Communist who had read the Quaderni before their publication in 1948. Before publication the Quaderni were quoted frequently by Togliatti in articles in Stato Operaio, L'Unità and Rinascita.

Again according to Paolo Spriano, the party's historian, "Togliatti is the communist leader who most deeply knew, assimilated and introduced Gramsci's thought, especially the reflections in the Quaderni and the writings on Italian culture and on the organic intellectual." While Spriano concedes that Togliatti "managed and popularized the Gramscian heritage," he claims that he did not do so "arbitrarily."⁵ For Alessandro Natta, current Secretary General of the party,

The fundamental Gramscian intuition that inspired all of Togliatti's life was that a different strategic terrain . . . than that of the October Revolution had to

be found . . . We know that this intuition led Gramsci to an original examination of the national terrain (the "war of position"). . . . This nucleus of Gramsci's ideas is present in Togliatti. . . it inspires him at the moment of the struggle for liberation and the founding in Italy of a new democracy.⁶

Togliatti's first speeches upon his return to Italy in March 1944 are crucial in understanding the parameters of the post-Gramscian party, its goals in Italian society, its structure, and what has been interpreted as its progressive "laicization." By laicization is meant the process of moving away from integrist, totalitarian political positions that are justified by an ideology that is dogmatically received. According to PCI Senator and intellectual Giuseppe Chiarante, the first step in laicization is the distinction between ideology and politics, where political adherence to a party and political action require that one accept the political working platform of a party but not necessarily the ideological principles that underpin that platform.⁷ It is to be noted that "laicized" has an entirely different meaning than "laic." In Italian politics, by "laic" is understood an "anti-clerical" position. Historically, the PRI, PLI and PSI are laic in the sense of adopting nineteenth century conceptions of rigorous separation of Church and State, and consequent containment or reduction of the Church's political role. Because of its traditional position of conciliation towards the Church, the PCI is clearly not a laic party in the negative connotation of the term.

Togliatti's first speeches are important also because

they spell out the limitations within which the party was constrained by the new international order. It is this 1944 policy that still defines and structures the party today.

The Policy of a United National Front
("Svolta di Salerno")

On the paternity of the policy of the "svolta di Salerno," also known as the policy of a united national front, Spriano makes the following point:

. . . While it is not to be at all excluded that the diplomatic and political lines [of the svolta di Salerno] had been agreed upon in Moscow by Togliatti and Vyshinsky in February 1944, it is also true that as of October-November 1943 Togliatti's thinking on the Italian crisis and its solution was going in the same direction.

Spriano continues:

If the diplomatic documents show that the svolta di Salerno, which consisted in the entry of anti-fascist parties in the 1944 Badoglio government, was suggested by the Soviet government before Togliatti arrived in Italy, they also prove that the USSR Communist Party took into consideration in its decision the struggle that was being conducted by the joint command of anti-fascist parties.⁸

Togliatti knew the limits within which a popular movement could act in 1943-1945, the concluding years of the war. The point of departure for the "svolta" was the necessity of contact with forces "against which we would have to fight, either to eliminate them or to force them onto another terrain . . . there was someone stronger than us and stronger than the bloc of all democratic forces: the Allies." ⁹

This policy of national unity supersedes the Third International policy that was in effect from 1919 to 1943 (the "fronte unico" or "one front" policy). In practice, in 1943 Gramsci's earlier analysis was adopted, to the effect that there is a qualitative difference between fascism and liberal-bourgeois democracy; it is a change in the form of the state.¹⁰ In analyzing the Theses of Lyons (January 1926) especially Thesis 4, Spriano notes that the thesis of the one front takes as a model the Russian Revolution and the building of a Bolshevick-type party as its natural corollary. The front was to be effected through workers' and peasant committees directed by the PCI. This time period was seen as a preparation for revolution, and

. . . it is denied that one could come out of fascism with a transformation into a liberal or democratic structure. The tactic of the one front is a tool to unmask the so-called democratic parties, including the Italian Socialist Party.¹¹

On the contrary, the policy of national unity aimed to reconstitute a liberal-bourgeois democratic framework as a necessary transitional structure and terrain in which the workers' movement could later undertake a transition to Socialism. One of the main reasons for dissolving the Third International was the recognition of the profound difference in the ways of historical development of each country, that is, the different character--at times the contradictory character--of social orders, the different level and manner of their development and, finally, the different degrees of consciousness and organization of the working classes.¹²

In his "Instructions to the Party Organizations in the Occupied Zone" (June 1944) Togliatti asks that all anti-fascist and all national, popular forces be organized into National Liberation Committees (CLN). Insurrection must be a mass action of all the people. There must be alliances and direct contact with "Socialists, left Christian Democrats, Catholic masses, patriotic soldiers and officers." Togliatti continues:

. . . The insurrection we want does not have the purpose of imposing socialist-type or communist-type social and political transformations. Its purpose is national liberation and the destruction of fascism. Once all of Italy has been freed, all other problems will be solved by the people through a people's referendum and the election of a Constituent Assembly.¹³ (Italics mine.)

Togliatti asks for a joint command of all Resistance forces. In answering a criticism by Azione Cattolica that had called the proposal to cooperation, made by the PCI, "hypocritical," and had accused the party of "planning to damage and ruin religion," Togliatti replies:

. . . If Azione Cattolica means that there is in the Catholic conscience something which is contrary to anti-fascism or to the . . . aspirations of the workers, then Azione Cattolica does a disservice to religion itself . . . One can accuse an individual of hypocrisy, but not a mass movement.¹⁴

In obedience to the policy of national unity, Togliatti was at pains to instruct the fighters against sectarianisms or the use of ostentatious communist symbols, against exclusivism. In asking the Resistance fighters to persuade those who are not Communist to join the PCI-led Garibaldi Brigades, he specifies that "religiosity, or the lack of a theoretical political

education, must not be an obstacle to joining.¹⁵

The Structure of the New Party
("Partito Nuovo")

The Party was, first of all, set up as a nationalistic party, a party that defends the interests of the nation and the interests of democracy.¹⁶ As at the time of the Risorgimento, "all Italians, putting aside their differences of political opinion, religious faith or social category, must unite . . . in the fight to free the country from the invader and from fascist betrayal."¹⁷ In order to carry out this policy, a fundamental change in the character of the party is required. No longer underground, it must become a mass party (calling to itself workers, intellectuals, Catholic peasant masses). With the latter especially, "we must find today and tomorrow a terrain of common action and of understanding" and they "must be our allies in the construction of a democratic Italy." In short, "the party must unite all the anti-fascist, democratic and national forces."¹⁸

Again Togliatti stressed that the war of Resistance did not have the revolution as objective but the defeat of Hitler and Fascism, the nation's liberation and the setting up of a national Constituent Assembly:

. . . Our most revolutionary task is to free the country:
. . . being in favor of the government ["governativi"]
and being collaborationists is not incompatible with
being militant Marxists.¹⁹

In other speeches of the same period Togliatti specified that the Constitution would have to protect the following rights:

- the right of worship and religious freedom of conscience

- the right to small and middle sized property (against monopoly capitalism)

- a pluralistic party system

- the right to land ownership and farm machinery by small and middle sized peasants.

In further spelling out the objectives and structures of the party he argued that, in order to direct the reconstruction of the country, the Party could not remain an "association of propagandists of general and ideological objectives, a group of pure people." It must become: a national party; a mass party and a people's party; and a party with an active, not just an oppositional, role in government. The party would have to be able to reach out to categories of people, i.e., be an inter-class party.²⁰

According to Spriano, Togliatti's intent of "political agreement with the DC for a common program of economic, political, social regeneration was already clear in the policy of national unity."²¹ Specifically concerning religion, Togliatti argued that the Party had become a mass party (1,800,000 card-carrying members as of the end of 1945). Since it was no longer a clandestine oppositional party, it must have a political program to serve as foundation for the unity of its members. It must also have a method of

discipline, but not an ideology:

Undoubtedly . . . a majority of members are believers . . . this fact has certain consequences . . . in the Italian Communist Party is already realized a political unity independently of religious or philosophical convictions. . . . We therefore propose that the de facto situation be sanctioned in the statement that to the party can belong citizens independently of race, religious conviction or philosophical conviction. . . . This in no way means we want to do away with the traditions and principles of the party . . . but that we open the party to those elements that are necessary to realize our contacts with all the working masses and direct them. . . . Our party wants to be a guide in all political and social fields of life. . . .

While being Bolshevick and Marxist-Leninist . . . the new party has inherited and carries forward the best traditions of the Italian people, from the oldest to the most recent, and the best traditions of the Risorgimento.²² (Italics mine.)

The Status and Function of Religion in the Party Statute

In the same report to the V National Party Congress of 1945 cited above, Togliatti specified that freedom of conscience, faith, worship, religious propaganda and religious organizations are fundamental democratic freedoms and must be so sanctioned and protected in the Constitution. He made the point that

Because the organization of the Church will continue to have its center in Italy . . . a conflict with her would perturb the conscience of many citizens . . . we must therefore carefully regulate our position on the Church and on the problem of religion. . . .

Naturally, the Catholic Church has its interests as a universal organization and it would be out of place if we asked her to regulate her policies in accordance with Italian interests and especially the interests of Italian democracy.²³ (Italics mine.)

Accordingly, Article 2 of the 1946 Party Statute states that anyone over eighteen can become a member of the

party

. . . independently of race, religious faith or philosophical convictions--so long as they accept the party's political program and commit themselves to work for its realization, to observe the rules of the Statute, to work in a party organization, to regularly pay the dues, and to make a contribution to the party press.²⁴

This article was supplemented by Article 5 in the same Statute that established the duty of every party member to

. . . acquire and deepen--with the exceptions set forth in Article 2--the knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and to apply its teachings to the solution of concrete issues.²⁵

At the XV National Party Congress held in 1979, during Berlinguer's tenure, Article 5 was substituted by Article 7 which no longer explicitly required a knowledge of Marxism-Leninism but merely stated that

. . . every party member has the duty of increasing one's cultural and political knowledge and deepening the study of history and of the patrimony of ideas of the Party and of the workers' and revolutionary movement as a whole.²⁶

On religious faith specifically, an extremely significant thesis was adopted at the X National Party Congress of 1962. This thesis deeply changed the traditional communist perception of the role and function of religion in society. It is a rejection of the standard Marxian interpretation of religion as an expression of ideological alienation. It stated:

. . . not only can the aspiration towards a socialist society develop in those who have a religious faith, but such aspiration can find stimulus in the religious consciousness itself, faced with the dramatic problems of the contemporary world.²⁷

This specific point will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

The 1946 distinction made in Article 2 of the Statute is the first distinction the party makes between politics and ideology. Political adherence and action requires the acceptance of a political platform, not necessarily of the ideology that underpins the principles of that platform. This is a first step towards what Chiarante calls the "lai-cization" of the party.²⁸

The Concordat and the Constitution

In trying to enter into a political alliance with the Christian Democrats that would be acceptable to PCI rank and file members, Togliatti did not dwell on the Church's responsibilities and alliances with the fascist regime.²⁹ Togliatti's vote in favor of Article 7 of the Constitution of 1947 is generally interpreted as one such effort to make the Party acceptable to the DC in a sought-for long-term government coalition. But if that was the purpose, it fell through: the coalition was broken by the DC shortly after the Concordat was safely incorporated into the Constitution, and it was incorporated in its exact (1929) fascist version. Article 7 of the Constitution reads:

7. The State and the Catholic Church are, each in their sphere, independent and sovereign.
Their relations are regulated by the Lateran Pacts. Modifications to the Pacts, accepted by the parties, do not necessitate a Constitutional revision procedure

The Lateran Pacts are the ones signed in 1929 by Benito Mussolini and Pope Pius XI, and they consist of:

1. The Treaty. It contains the norms relating to the prerogatives and the boundaries of the State of the Vatican and its financial relations with Italy

2. The Concordat. This regulates the relations between the powers of the State and the powers of the Church.

Essentially, the Treaty recognizes the Vatican as a sovereign state; it recognizes territorial sovereignty (but not absolute sovereignty) to the Vatican State over what is called "Vatican City" (a part of the city of Rome). The Concordat "grants a privileged sphere to Catholic religion." Among the privileges are that the Roman Catholic religion is recognized as the state religion; the teaching of that religion is mandated throughout the public and private educational system, and validity is recognized to church marriages. Another treaty (still part of the Lateran Pacts) regulates fiscal and economic relations such as tax exemptions for Church property, the recognition to the Vatican State of the "donation of the Emperor Constantine" [sic], state-paid salaries to parish priests, bishops and other clergy, special law exemptions for church property, investment and banking institutions owned by the Church or by religious orders, etc.

The Socialist Party and other historically laic (anti-clerical) parties voted against incorporation of this article into the Constitution.³⁰ At the parliamentary committee stage the PCI had also been in opposition. But, to everyone's surprise, Togliatti made a very strong speech

as a result of which PCI parliamentarians, bound by party discipline, voted in favor of the article. The speech is a masterpiece of political subtlety, although a subtle analysis of the Catholic question seems to be lacking. He argued that the DC set itself up as the sole defender of religious liberty, whereas other parties also defend the right of worship. "Even in the Communist Party there are Catholic citizens--and maybe they are the majority of party members--and we assert and defend the freedom of their religious conscience."³¹

Togliatti lamented that the Christian Democrats acted not as a government party but as the agent of the Vatican and that the Vatican, as the second party to the Concordat, was not present (thus possibly violating proper procedure). Then Togliatti made reference to L'Osservatore Romano as the official organ of the party which had not been officially consulted. The articles that he referred to in the Osservatore Romano spoke of a "threat to religious peace" should the government not reaffirm, or should the government break, the Pacts. The articles also spoke of the threat of "religious strife" and claimed that the Pacts should be incorporated into the Constitution because they were, in fact, "signed between the Italian people, their faith and their Church." Togliatti took this as being the will of the other party, and that religious peace was a fundamental condition for rebuilding the country at that time.³²

Togliatti further made the point that Communists

were going to vote for Article 7 because they wanted the moral and political unity of the nation. Above all,

. . . we want to show that socialist regimes reconcile themselves to the existence of religion . . . that there is no contrast between a socialist regime and religious freedom of the Church, particularly of the Catholic Church.³³

Togliatti rejected the insinuation of any hidden political purpose in his decision: he called this a deep position of principle, arising out of a desire to see "the unity of the workers and around them, the moral and political unity of the nation."

A September 1944 letter by Togliatti to Alcide De Gasperi (leader of the Christian Democrats, and later Prime Minister) on his plans for the post-war regime is along the same lines of a deep desire to participate in a coalition government:

. . . I think it is superfluous to repeat to you on this occasion our declaration of absolute respect for the religious faith of the Italian people and our desire of brotherly cooperation with all the Italian democratic and anti-fascist forces. In particular, we hope and wish that a concrete political agreement can be reached with your party in order to create . . . a bloc of popular forces that may guarantee the triumph and stability of the regime to which the workers of our country aspire.³⁴

De Gasperi's reply hints at the compromise that is being negotiated. The "pledge of freedom" in question is the incorporation of the Concordat into the Constitution:

We agree with you on the necessity of cooperation at this time with "all the Italian democratic and anti-fascist forces." On possible future forms of cooperation, you can read the enclosed Order of the Day which should be, according to us [DC] the method to be

followed in order to ascertain the real convergences of the parties on future substantial and structural reforms, without perturbing and weakening the present cooperation that unites us in the government and that we, at this moment, believe indispensable for internal and foreign reasons . . .

I know well, dear Togliatti, that you show maximum understanding of these needs; but often from the periphery news reach us that feed fear and mistrust. The Nation will be greatly indebted to you if you will be able to dispel these fears and mistrust and create a climate that is a pledge for a future of freedom.³⁵

The Cold War and the Catholic Church's Anti-Communism

One of Togliatti's merits is that from the first he gave a wide cultural and moral stature to the Party, that is, he presented it as a party that works to unify the nation, to restore democracy, to build a more democratic system through the Constitution, to unify the masses in a common patriotic goal. Togliatti's party has always avoided clash and confrontation with the Catholic world. Since being at the opposition from 1948 onwards, it has always avoided petty or narrowly defined political propaganda and confrontation with the Church, even when the Party was branded as the "red devil" and Communists and Socialists were excommunicated from receiving Church sacraments. Whenever the Church has been most hostile and has directly intervened in the political arena by clearly intimidating the Catholic electorate, Togliatti has decried this intervention as being a violation of the principle of separation of Church and State encoded in the Concordat and the Constitution. When

the Church clearly chose the Christian Democrats as her political arm, Togliatti affirmed for the left also the right (and duty) to defend freedom of religious conscience and expression: "I do not think any of the left parties wants to leave [to the DC] the exclusivity of this function."

In the trying times of the cold war, during the last years of Pope Pius XII's pontificate, Togliatti presented himself as a man of the Enlightenment and Church politics were criticized by him as being obscurantist. I do not think it is by coincidence that the only literary work by Togliatti is an introduction to a 1949 pocket-book edition of Voltaire's 1763 Traité sur la tolérance. In the short preface he berated the ecclesiastical authorities for their capability of "poisoning, perturbing, lacerating mankind with their empty controversies, ridiculous condemnations and senseless persecutions." The Enlightenment is seen as the end development of that modern rationalism that began with the Renaissance, as a reaction to scholastic philosophy, and as a triumph of the methods of free examination and of materialism:

. . . One could not, in fact, support the thesis of tolerance against fanaticism without rejecting the doctrinal bases of the system of thought upon which that fanaticism supported itself, and if today we feel that the battle of the Enlightenment against religious fanaticism can become actual again, this is also

connected with a philosophical and cultural degeneration whereby those who have "overtaken" rationalism have contributed to restore the old obscurantistic and clerical currents.³⁶

Yet, as Socialist intellectual and PSI Senator Lelio Basso argues, it was the privileges reconfirmed to the Church by the retention of the Concordat that encouraged the Vatican in its essentially "theocratic push to subjugate civil society." For Basso, concordats are the historical product of the Constantinian era, an era marked by the permanent interconnection--which becomes confusion--between political power and ecclesiastical power.³⁷

Efforts towards Détente

The extent to which Togliatti's views on the status of both world views differ from Gramsci's is exemplified in a reply to an article which appeared in Civiltá Cattolica, the authoritative Jesuit journal and semi-official organ of the Vatican. The article by Jesuit Antonio Messineo presented Communism and Catholicism as two complete doctrines or Weltanschauungen and, as such, irreconcilable, since Catholicism is founded upon a philosophy of transcendence and Communism upon a philosophy of immanence. Togliatti replied that by "dialogue" he does not mean a reconciliation of philosophies but of people, a coming closer of the two movements in order to "safeguard peace . . . it is practical action that counts, with individuals and also with organized groups and their executive cadres."³⁸ The Civiltá Cattolica

article had been prompted by a 1954 speech by Togliatti, "Per un accordo tra comunisti e cattolici per salvare la civiltá umana" ("For a Meeting between Communists and Catholics to Save Human Civilization")³⁹ occasioned by the rising threat of atomic war due to USSR and NATO tensions.

Civilization is conceived by Togliatti as the amalgam of contrasting forces, which make up a common heritage. Especially, there exist two "world-wide movements," Communism and Catholicism. Is it possible to find a way beyond the occasional contact, a deeper meeting to save civilization? The speech attacks the United States as being responsible for the threat of annihilation and criticizes the bonds existing between the Church and United States imperialism. But, he argues, the grassroots of the Catholic world feel a need for peace, just as the Communist workers need and want peace. "We do not ask that the Catholic world stop being Catholic . . . we ask for tolerance and cooperation." Togliatti is persuaded that there are forces in the Catholic world that--albeit uncertainly and contradictorily--can be a positive, progressive push. Togliatti seems to believe that notwithstanding clerical opposition, the Catholic popular base is groping for a dialogue.

One first step towards a dialogue would be a "reciprocal recognition of values" of both movements. Especially important is the distinction made for the first time by the Party among the elements composing the Catholic

world. It is not as monolithic as it seems. The masses are identifiable neither with their organizations nor with the executives of those organizations. A dialogue is not merely an occasional contact to resolve "contingent political issues, but a deeper meeting, as a contribution to create a movement to save our civilization." The dialogue is a positive relationship with the Catholic-inspired popular forces. While the cadres lean towards collaboration with the United States, the base is "skeptical and mistrustful. Many Catholics are already with us, follow us, vote for us." But even those who are against Communism feel the same needs as the Communist masses. And, most importantly, there are many more points of contact between the masses and the organizations that represent them. Finally, "we Italian Communists, being at the center of the Catholic world, have a special task in developing the possibility of understanding and of agreement." ⁴⁰

The policy of an "Italian way to socialism" emerges explicitly at the VIII National Party Congress of 1956, held right after the XX Congress of the Soviet Union CP which, by laying bare the Stalinist excesses, had given the green light to the growing independence of the Communist parties from Moscow. This policy looked forward to a process of continuous compromises with the Catholic world. It favored a center-left government (DC/PSI) as a strategy to dilute anti-Communist sentiments and open a way for new relations between the Party and the Christian Democrats. At the VIII Congress, Togliatti reported:

. . . The search for an Italian way to socialism must of necessity include a political alliance with . . . anti-capitalist Catholic forces.⁴¹

This policy was reaffirmed at the IX Congress of 1960:

The victory of socialism in Italy is bound to the formation of a bloc of forces that are larger than the bloc of the workers and peasants. . . . The action for an entente with the Catholic world must be understood as one aspect of the Italian way to socialism . . . as an alliance not only with the popular Catholic masses but also with their organizations.⁴²

In the 1950s the Party began to make a distinction between the top hierarchy of the Church, the Curia élite in the Vatican, the cadres of Catholic political institutions, the simple parish priests, and the Catholic masses. It launched bridges towards the masses, especially towards the "progressive forces of the Catholic world." The dialogue, according to Jesuit Giuseppe De Rosa of Civiltá Cattolica,

. . . is a peculiar fact, a specifically Italian phenomenon, because there is no other alternative for an Italian way to socialism . . . one must reach an identity of action with the Catholic popular forces.⁴³

According to PCI Senator Giuseppe Chiarante (who had been expelled from the DC in 1954), the stress on the "common foundations of civilization" shared by the two ideologies, and the need for a "reciprocal recognition of each other's values" that would allow Catholicism and Communism to recognize each other in the "same goals" and cooperate to reach those goals, is a major step in the development of the distinction between ideology and politics, part of the process of laicization or secularization of the Party.⁴⁴

The Function of Religious Faith in History

Another major qualitative shift appears in the March 1963 lecture on religion delivered by Togliatti in Bergamo-- a traditionally Catholic city, both politically and devotionally, and the birthplace of Pope John XXIII. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, a few months before the Bergamo lecture a thesis had been introduced in the Party Statute that affirmed the "progressive role of religious consciousness." This revision of the traditional alienation theory is the central point of the lecture. The lecture itself is the most philosophical of Togliatti's works, most of which arise out of day-to-day political battles. It deals specifically with the religious question. Togliatti rejected the standard Marxian (but not Gramscian) interpretation that religious faith disappears as structural conditions evolve. "History has shown otherwise," he said bluntly, "this evaluation of religion has failed the test of history."

. . . For what concerns the development of religious consciousness, we no longer accept the naïve and erroneous conception according to which the extension of knowledge and a change in social structures suffice to determine radical modifications of that religious consciousness.⁴⁵

For Chiarante, laicization means the critique--as Togliatti has done--of any form of ideology as false consciousness. It is the rejection of any claim to be ahistorical; it is also the rejection of tendencies to harden the theoretical heritage of the workers' movement into a

dogma that cannot be questioned. On the contrary, this theoretical tradition must always be left open to confrontation with other currents of thought. The lecture's central point is the alienating condition created by the technological development of a late capitalist society, and as exemplified by the arms race.

. . . In taking stock of this reality, the believer says that it is the sphere of the sacred that progressively shrinks. We say that it is the person that is mutilated, compressed, and to this capitalistic prospect we oppose the prospect of a socialist society . . . where man is no longer alone and humanity truly becomes a living unity.⁴⁶

In comparing Catholicism and Communism, Togliatti takes up the Church's contention that Communism is a religion and the Party is a church. "This is true in the sense that we have a faith, the certainty that a socialist transformation is not only a necessity, but a task that commits, with the certainty of victory, the better party of humanity." After citing Genesis and John XXIII to the effect that, indeed, "man must become the master of nature," he adds that for Communism

. . . man must become the master also of society and of its development . . . so that the full development of the human person can be reached; this is the goal of the whole history of mankind. . . . One can therefore say that ours is, if you want, a complete religion of man.⁴⁷
(Italics mine.)

Unlike Catholicism however, this religion does not include belief in a supernatural reality. The lecture speaks of the momentous changes occurring in the Church as a result of Vatican Council II. This part of the lecture and the Yalta

Memorial which address the phenomenon of the Council, will be discussed in the next chapter. Togliatti's lecture was given almost simultaneously with the publication of John XXIII's encyclical Pacem in Terris (April 1963) and exhibits striking points of similarity with the contents and tone of the encyclical.

It should be noted that at no time in his openings to the Catholics did Togliatti question the validity of Catholic ideology. The two ideologies are taken as true and valid in their own right although they are, metaphysically, mutually exclusive. Ironically, the Catholic hierarchy shares the same viewpoint; unlike them, Togliatti refused to enter into the philosophical debate. The groups or movements that represent those ideologies in the political arena are also accepted by Togliatti as "two relatively organic realities." But between these distinct and complex realities a relationship as of one power to another power can be established.

This representation of the Catholic world has obvious built-in limitations.⁴⁸ It confuses the political and religious levels of Catholic institutions and expression. On the same subject, Vannino Chiti concludes that

. . . undoubtedly for Togliatti Catholicism is expressed on the political level fundamentally through the Christian Democratic Party . . . and the DC is always referred to as a component of the larger Catholic movement.⁴⁹

As will be discussed in Chapters IV and V, the Catholics who engaged in the dialogue after Vatican Council II rejected

precisely this approach as being an institutional approach that tends to control society rather than allowing a pluralism of interpretation and of political action.

The Modern Prince and the New Party

In reviewing the Gramscian elements that have been retained in the "partito nuovo" we locate them specifically in the following:

1. the choice of a long-term strategy, or war of position, in civil society--a slow process of conquest of power. As Gramsci had pointed out, the Party had to contend with the enormous secular power of the Vatican and the appeal of the Church in a traditionally and almost exclusively Catholic country. In the short term Togliatti acted expediently in attempting to come to terms with and form alliances with the Church

2. This long-term strategy includes a movement towards spreading a Marxian Weltanschauung. In practice, the power of the Church acted as a justification for the strategy and as an impediment to this long-term objective in civil society because of the Church's stranglehold on religious expression and over both public and private education.⁵⁰ But Togliatti did not challenge the Church.

3. As far as the other pole of the Gramscian strategy is concerned--the war of movement, or the Leninist revolutionary dimension--this seems to gradually shrink as the reformist, organizational dimension becomes stronger and the Party comes closer to actually sharing government power.

According to political sociologist Sidney Tarrow, the PCI is a unique party--the strategic and organizational embodiment of Gramsci's political philosophy. It is neither Leninist nor Bolshevick (not a party of combatants or a party of believers), not social democratic (à la Kautsky) nor simply reformist (à la Bernstein). Its distinguishing principle is the theory of the conquest of power through the permeation in civil society of a Marxian hegemony.⁵¹ But, according to Percy Allum, the Party has not attacked the structure of power of Italian capitalism: it has operated within its system for goals that are partially acceptable to the system. It gave no answer to the relation of its policies to the achievement of Socialism. In times of crisis the Party accepted Togliatti's reformist interpretation of the party goals rather than acting in accordance with Gramsci's revolutionary élan.⁵²

4. Concerning class alliances, Togliatti adapted the Gramscian analysis that "the party, to realize its ideals, must reach a solid alliance with the working masses and the peasant masses." As these masses are oriented towards the Christian Democrats, the working class must develop a "tight cooperation" with the DC.⁵³ According to Togliatti the possibility of agreement existed with these groups on the land question and on the question of monopoly capital. Thus the possibility of agreement between Communist and Socialist groups and Catholic organizations exists.

It should be noted that right from the beginning Togliatti, in speaking of alliances and cooperation, refers

to the institutionalized channels of the Catholic movement and the Communist movement, not to the people as such. Because of this priority, the religious question is put in abeyance:

. . . We respect religious popular convictions because we believe they cannot be discussed at this time by the party through political avenues. This attitude on our part creates a respect for our own convictions on the part of all sectors of the Catholic party; it creates also the possibility of a political agreement between our party and the DC.⁵⁴

It seems plausible, as Allum argues, that Togliatti has interpreted the enormous strength of the Church as something permanent in Italy and in world history. This would at least in part explain the attitude of broad religious tolerance adopted early on by the Party.⁵⁵ This would be opposed to Gramsci's vision of replacing the Church by a new Reformation movement.

The International Context: The Allies

The 1943 policy of national unity and the subsequent policy of a coalition government was in contradiction with the Party's original insurrectional and revolutionary objectives. It was incomprehensible to most rank and file Communists who thought that it was a tactic and that there were "secret [revolutionary] plans."⁵⁶ Of course, this lack of credibility was even stronger among PCI enemies, especially the Vatican. The policy of national unity was, at least in part, dictated by the fact that "Italy is a zone occupied by the Allies, therefore the English and the Americans have the decisive

word in our internal affairs." In 1944, the Allies prevented the proclamation of a republican government (the new government of national front with Togliatti as minister swore loyalty not to the king but to the nation). For the constitution of the Badoglio government the authorization of the Inter-Allied Council was required (June 1944). In the meantime, Pope Pius XII and Winston Churchill met to discuss the "menace of Communism" (August 1944).

In the Resistance (also called "Partisan") army the largest brigades were communist, and were known as the Garibaldi Brigades. According to Ferruccio Parri of the Partito d'Azione in July 1944 the Garibaldi Brigades represented fifty percent of the organized Resistance. According to Spriano, in November 1944 they had grown to 90,000 units. According to De Gasperi, in the last months of the war they numbered from 100,000 to 120,000. Giorgio Galli in his Storia del Partito comunista italiano estimates the proportion of communist Resistance fighters to two thirds of all the organized Resistance.

The Allies tried to "reduce the Resistance movement to an insignificant proportion." According to Resistance and PCI leader Luigi Longo, General Alexander "tried to eliminate the Italian liberation movement which had acquired a character and an extension that looked too promising [for a revolution]." The Allies were afraid of an Italian Communist insurrection (analogous to what would happen in

Greece). Therefore, the chiefs of the National Liberation Committees had to sign an agreement that they would obey the Allied Command "including the order to disband and to disarm."⁵⁷

The Teheran Conference (December 1943) had secured the opening of the second front and the transfer of the center of gravity of Anglo-American operations from the Mediterranean to Northern Europe. The Moscow Agreement of November 1943 was interpreted restrictively at the Conference. This meant that by the end of 1943 Togliatti must have known that Italy was now within the Anglo-American sphere of influence. The Moscow Agreement had provided for an Advisory Council to assume control of Italy at the end of the Allied Forces military regime, hence the Party could have been allowed to assume some form of Allied civil rule where the Soviet Union would have a voice. But this did not happen because the Western Allies prolonged the military regime in Italy until the peace treaty was signed, thus minimizing Soviet influence. By that time, the United States had given guarantees to Italy as preliminary to Italy entering NATO (which Italy did in 1949). Therefore, Togliatti must have known by the end of 1943 that no other strategy than that of the united front was objectively possible for the Party. Thus it was that Italy came permanently under the United States sphere of influence. "The attempt to conquer power by means of a revolutionary insurrection was ruled out by the presence of Anglo-American troops on Italian soil."⁵⁸

The New Party and the Social Context

I have dedicated considerable space to illustrate Togliatti's policy of national unity during the Resistance period because it is important to make clear that the call for a dialogue with the Church, for collaboration with the Catholic party, for a mutual "hands off" attitude towards each other's ideology, is not so much a development of party policy throughout the post-war period, as it is the logical unraveling of the principles set forth by Togliatti in 1944. The changes in the party Statute on ideology, faith and politics, the vote in favor of Article 7 of the Constitution, the policy of an Italian way to Socialism (one specification of polycentrism) and, later, Berlinguer's theory of Euro-communism and his proposals for a historic compromise, a third way to Socialism, and a democratic alternative are all contained in the sharp turn effected by Togliatti in 1944.

After the svolta di Salerno, the party is no longer Gramsci's party. It is no longer a Leninist, revolutionary party. Most importantly, the party is no longer a class party. Gramsci believed that the working class should make an alliance with other classes in order to promote a socialist revolution. But Togliatti considered all class alliances useful in themselves insofar as they promoted the national interest (and insofar as they augmented party membership). From the workers as the backbone of party membership, the membership has been reduced to the "predominance of working

class families." Instead of building a class party capable of directing the struggle, Togliatti "has assembled an all-class, predominantly proletarian alliance whose chief appeal has been electoral," says Allum.

Certainly, the Party's changes in structure and its distinctions between ideology and politics and religious belief and political program may have been the one reason for its immediate, enormous expansion. But, according to Allum, two fifths of the Party's strength is in the "red belt" (North-Central Italy), with sharecroppers and the middle class as the typical members. The Party lost votes in the industrial triangle in the North (Milan-Turin-Genoa) from 1946 to 1963 (presumably, highly paid technical workers), but this loss was offset by new adherents from the same area, mostly internal migrants who are either marginally employed or unemployed. There is a predominance of worker members in the North and of peasant members in the South; but the Party does not have the majority of either of these classes. It has about one third of each of these classes; it also has strength among the lower middle class and the urban poor in the South.

If one looks at its membership, the Party is as much multi-class in composition as its counterpart, the Christian Democratic Party.⁵⁹ The Party unlike the DC, however, claims that its political program is in the interests , and carries forth the values, of the industrial working class. The DC's program has reflected, from the beginning, the values and beliefs

of middle class and lower middle class Catholics. However, the general shrinking of the industrial working class and of the peasant class, and the increase in the tertiary economy (white and pink collar workers) have reduced the differences between the two parties' membership, values, and political program. If this analysis is granted, then collaboration with the DC makes sense since the two parties' rank and file membership is drawn for the most part from the same social groups, except for a core of intellectuals in the PCI and a core of grands bourgeois and former fascists in the DC.

While changes in social stratification are amply discussed in Chapter IV, it suffices here, for our purposes, to note that blue collar workers and a large group of intellectuals were the traditional groups to whom Marxism appealed. In Italy, farmless laborers and sharecroppers also responded to the Party's appeal. But since the end of World War II the peasant's share of the labor force has greatly shrunk, and in the 1960s the number of blue collar workers in industry peaked and then declined, with a concurrent sharp rise in white and pink collar workers in the growing service sector of the economy. Accordingly, after 1944 Togliatti excluded from the list of class enemies small owners, artisans, white and pink collars workers as well as professionals. In the middle 1960s the number of small and middle sized firms increased, so the party enlarged its appeal to include also owners and managers. The class enemy was now

limited to the small number of large, private monopolists. But since a growing number of large firms became publicly controlled this left, in principle, very few class enemies. According to historian Norman Kogan,

. . . The evolution of doctrinal positions, the open acceptance of legal and political traditions of the bourgeoisie, was linked in part to the policy of expanding the party's penetration in the growing, rather than the shrinking, sectors of Italian society. While this did not significantly increase party membership . . . its social composition changed.⁶⁰

The following passage from Togliatti's motion on the Italian way to Socialism, which was approved in full at the VIII National Party Congress of 1956, clearly delineates the party's thinking on party class membership and the party's political program:

Motion 2 envisages the possibility of a permanent alliance of the working class with strata of the middle class ["ceti medi"] who are stratified in different social groups in the different regions and zones in Italy. [This possibility] would be determined by the convergence of economic and social interests and of political perspectives. . . .

. . . Socialist democracy guarantees to the "ceti medi" their activity and the maintenance of their social and economic characteristics in a new democratic and socialist society. In this new society they will be able to continue to carry out a socially useful and progressive function. The passage to new, socialist-type relations will take place only on the basis of their economic advantage and free consensus.⁶¹ (Italics mine.)

Tables 1 and 2 on the next page illustrate the growth of the PCI, electorally and in terms of membership.

TABLE 1
ELECTORAL RESULTS FOR THE MAJOR ITALIAN PARTIES
(1946-1985, IN PERCENTAGES)

Election Year	DC	PCI	PSI	PCI/PSI	PSDI
June 1946	35.2	18.9	20.7		
Apr. 1948	48.5			31	7.1
June 1953	40.1	22.6	12.7		4.5
June 1958	42.4	22.7	14.2		4.5
May 1963	38.3	25.3	13.8		6.1
May 1968	39.1	26.9	(14.5-- PSI/PSDI jointly)		
May 1972	38.8	27.2	9.6		5.1
June 1976	38.8	34.4	9.6		
June 1979	38.3	31.5	10.4		
June 1983	32.6	31.2	11.4		4.0
June 1984	33.0	34.5	11.3		3.4
May 1985	34.7	30.8	13.1		3.5

TABLE 2
PCI MEMBERSHIP (1945-1983)

Apr. 1945	400,000	Dec. 1956	2,035,353
Dec. 1945	1,800,000	Dec. 1959	1,789,269
Jan. 1948	2,330,000	Dec. 1967	1,750,000
Dec. 1951	2,580,765	Dec. 1976	1,800,000
Dec. 1953	2,500,000	Dec. 1983	1,675,000

SOURCE: La Stampa (Turin), 14 May 1985, p.1 and various.

The New Party's Approach to the
Catholic Question

Togliatti was faced with the Catholic question in a way in which Gramsci could not have been. The Christian Democratic Party, as the largest party during the last years of the war, became around 1947 the "Catholic" party; it was officially sanctioned by the Vatican. For Togliatti, the DC was a continuation of the Partito Popolare Italiano: it maintained the same social base and largely the same executive group as the PPI. Like the PPI, the DC was fundamentally peasant, Southern, and lower middle class. This was very important in a country where half of the gross national product still came from the farm. Given the "popular" elements in the party, it seemed to Togliatti that the DC could have reformist goals and the DC's conduct in 1944-1945 led him to "attribute to it different dispositions." Togliatti was persuaded that a coalition government with the presence of all the left and the DC could work. At that time, the DC was not yet the party of the bourgeoisie and of anti-Communism. It is only after 1945 that the international situation jelled and the Party was explicitly endorsed by the Vatican. The DC received extensive pressure from the Vatican and the United States government in the direction of anti-Communism and of pursuing the interests of the bourgeoisie and, internationally, of the Atlantic Alliance.⁶²

While there was, undoubtedly, an executive inner

group that was conservative and capitalist oriented, Togliatti thought that the mass membership of the DC would push the party to the left. According to DC historian Pietro Scoppola,

. . . It was in 1945 that the Vatican and the Catholic organizations decisively shifted towards an unconditional support of the Christian Democratic party . . . A decisive push was given . . . by the growing preoccupation given by the international affirmation of communism.⁶³

According to Spriano, Togliatti interpreted Gramsci's strategy of alliance of the working class and peasant masses as "an alliance of the three mass parties." But this is a simplification of the Gramscian analysis and of historical reality.⁶⁴ Togliatti saw the DC as a large mass movement (like the PCI and the PSI). Like them, he saw it as an essentially anti-capitalist (although inter-class) and as an essentially populist party.

I argue that it is a crucial error of judgment to see Catholicism as a movement and the Catholic party as an embodiment of that movement. Togliatti applied to Catholicism the same frame of reference that he applied to the PCI and to the workers' movement. To begin with, religion is never strictly just a political movement. Nor is Communism strictly a political movement. But while neither are narrow political movements, there is an important difference between the two: Communism embodies itself politically, in history: a political-social system is its goal. Catholicism on the other hand, in principle cannot

concretize itself politically in history, since its ultimate end is beyond history: God manifests itself in history, but never fully manifests itself at one specific historical time or in history as a whole.⁶⁵ Communism believes its goals are immanent in history. Catholicism sees human history as one manifestation of God.

As far as its being a movement is concerned, Gramsci had extensively studied the progressive role that Catholicism had had in early Italian history. But since the Counter-Reformation it had ceased being a movement. Only a superficial historical analysis could make one conclude that the destruction of Fascism and the sudden appearance of mass Catholic organizations made of Catholicism a movement. A mass, popular or quantitatively large organization does not make it a movement. A goal of deep transformation of consciousness and of society in a progressive sense is what adds to a large organization the quality of it representing a movement. Not just Togliatti, but all Communist leaders and intellectuals speak of Catholicism as a movement.⁶⁶ This is granting to it an analogous status to that of Socialism and of Communism. But placing Catholicism on the same political-historical level does not make it become the counterpart of the workers' movement. In studying Catholic social doctrine, Gramsci had seen that it is not a "first-priority political program required of all Catholics but only a polemical argument without political concreteness."

It is true that there were new perceptions in the Catholic world concerning the role of ideology and politics and the role Catholics could and ought to play towards the formation of a new Italy. Progressive Catholic groups saw that one condition for a socially progressive Catholic activism was independence of Catholic political organizations from the Vatican. As in the PCI, their view can be called a "laicization" or "secularization" of religion as it operates in the political sphere.⁶⁷

Needless to say, these groups and individuals were contained and restrained by the Vatican. They were not recognized as interlocutors by the Communists. Although the PCI officially addressed itself to the progressive Catholic forces, it did not specifically address itself to these groups since they were very small and not accepted by the Vatican and the main DC faction. These pre-Vatican Council II groups and potential Catholic dissenters will be discussed in Chapter III. In that chapter I will also discuss the unusual phenomenon of the "Catto-comunisti" (Communist-Catholics), a small group formed during the Resistance and headed by Italo Balbo, Franco Rodano and Adriano Ossicini. Ossicini is now an Independent Left member of Parliament. Rodano was excommunicated by the Vatican before the 1949 general excommunication. He then joined the PCI and became one of Togliatti's closest and most influential collaborators up to the latter's death. Rodano's theory of "twin rule" is

not unlike the Medieval theory of the twin rule of the sword and the cross; this view is called, in Italian political terminology, "integrismo" (integrism). Rodano's approach to Catholicism and to the Church is essentially the one adopted by Togliatti.

Togliatti's preoccupation with the Catholic world is present from the 1930s to his death. There does not seem to be any personal fixation with religion or any internal religious conflict as a base for this constant interest. Togliatti was neither a militant Catholic (like Rodano) nor a militant atheist (like Gramsci in his youth). He did not have the peculiar personal predicament of Berlinguer, who married a militant Catholic who raised their four children in the Catholic faith and had them attend private Catholic school. Already in the October 1936 issue of Stato Operaio and again in the December 1938 issue, Togliatti wrote open letters to Italian Catholics to urge them to join the Communists in an anti-fascist front. According to Gianni Riccamboni, his was an attempt to split the hierarchy from the laity, but in so doing he underestimated the strength of the alliance that existed between the Church and Fascism.⁶⁸

While it can be said that all of Gramsci's revolutionary strategy takes its point of departure, revolves around and is developed in contrast with the Catholic Church and with Catholicism taken as negative existing models, Togliatti's policies throughout his political career are bent

towards finding a compromise and an accommodation with the Catholic world through a reciprocal recognition of the Party and the Church and through a share in power with the Catholic party. Moreover, in making the PCI a multi-class party he took as a model the DC. This search for an entente is still the Party's aim even though the DC is no longer a monolithic Catholic party or a populist party.

According to Riccamboni, the Italian Communist Party shows concerning the Church and the Catholic world

. . . a radical insufficiency of analysis . . . the Italian Communist Party accepts the point of view of its interlocutor, it gives up putting into question the teaching privileges of the Church, and it implicitly recognizes the autonomy of spiritual reality as legitimately managed by the Church.⁶⁹

At no point in the twenty intervening years did Togliatti even once take a polemical or critical attitude towards religiosity or religious belief. There is no critique of religion from a Marxian, Feuerbachian or Gramscian point of view. There is no critique along the lines of superiority of the Marxian Weltanschauung over the Catholic one. There is no talk of intellectual and moral reform of the Italian national character, as there is in Gramsci. There is no critique of the ideological hegemony of the Church over Italian society. There is no polemical treatment of Catholic morality and beliefs from a rationalist point of view. Towards the Church, religion and the Vatican Togliatti maintained a conduct of guarded respect even at the height of the Church's anti-Communist backlash and direct meddling

in the internal politics of the country. Togliatti sparred with the Catholic party and the Vatican, and then only insofar as they participated as political elements, but not insofar as they are vehicles of religious expression.

In sum, the circumstances under which the Party was reorganized in 1944, and especially the fact that it made a crucial contribution to the writing of the Constitution, demand as a historical necessity that the PCI respect the rules of liberal-bourgeois democracy. The Party as it emerged from World War II is not, therefore, Gramsci's Modern Prince: it is no longer revolutionary. Gramsci's call for unity just before his arrest in 1926 was a temporary strategic proposal necessitated by the shift from a liberal to a fascist state. The party does not do justice to the context in which the strategy of a popular united front was developed and to the overall revolutionary project of the Modern Prince.

At the time of the workers' councils right after the Russian Revolution, Gramsci had called for a "new equilibrium between the future workers' state and the Catholic Church." But it is a distortion of Gramsci's thought and intent to claim that the 1947 Communist vote in favor of incorporating the Concordat into the Italian Constitution and the Party's vote in favor of renewing substantially the same Concordat in 1984 is in the spirit of the kind of relationship Gramsci envisaged between the Modern Prince and the Church.

The PCI accepts the legitimacy and validity of the Church as having its own world view and its own role in society. It attempts to achieve a practical, political accommodation with the Church. It does not attack that world view, nor does it question the increased international political role the Vatican has been assuming since the end of World War II.

Notes to Chapter II

1. In the 1950s and 1960s the main lines of dissent were never on the party management of the Catholic question. They concerned issues such as democratic centralism, loss of Leninist revolutionary objectives, handling of the Hungarian and Czechoslovakian revolutions, relations with the USSR CP, the party position concerning the Soviet critique of the Chinese Communist Party, and party policy concerning the PSI and the center-left government policy.

2. See Fattorini's and Bedeschi's analyses reported in chapter I.

3. Palmiro Togliatti, "Il destino dell'uomo," (1963) Opere Scelte, ed. Gianpasquale Santomassimo (Rome: Riuniti, 1974), p.1124.

4. See chapter III for Vatican-DC relations and tensions within the DC between the groups that wanted to retain a modicum of independence from the Church hierarchy (the Alcide De Gasperi faction) and the right-wing integrist faction (Fernando Tambroni group). See chapter V for Vatican pressure on ACLI and CGIL to break labor unity, which led to the founding of the Catholic labor union federation CISL in 1948.

5. Paolo Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, vol. 1: Da Bordiga a Gramsci (1920-1926) (Turin: Einaudi, 1979), p. lxxvii. Vol. 5: La Resistenza. Togliatti e il partito nuovo (1943-1945) (Turin: Einaudi, 1979), p. 408.

6. Alessandro Natta, interview, L'Unità, 14 October 1984, p. 1. See also Alessandro Natta, "Il PCI negli anni del centro-sinistra," Critica Marxista 22 (July-October 1984): 19-44 on the "new party" as a Gramscian party.

7. Giuseppe Chiarante, "Laicità, questione cattolica, questione democristiana," Critica Marxista 19 (1981):69.

8. Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, 5:294, quoting Leo Valiani.

9. Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, 5:313.

10. See Fiori, Antonio Gramsci: Life of a Revolutionary, pp. 249-250, quoted in chapter I.

11. Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, 1:490-497 passim.

12. In 1943 Togliatti voted in favor of dissolving the Third International. See Giorgio Amendola, "25 anni dopo lo scioglimento dell'Internazionale comunista," Critica Marxista 6 (1968):63-88.

13. Palmiro Togliatti, "Le istruzioni alle organizzazioni di partito nelle regioni occupate," (1944) Opere Scelte, pp. 331-332.

14. Togliatti, "Direttive del Comunismo," (1944) Opere Scelte, pp. 338-339.

15. Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, 5:376-379, quoting Togliatti.

16. Togliatti, "La politica di unità nazionale dei comunisti," (1944) Opere Scelte, pp.303-304.

17. Ibid., p. 305.

18. Ibid., pp. 306-307.

19. Ibid., p. 315.

20. Togliatti, "I compiti del partito nella situazione attuale," (1944) Opere Scelte, pp. 340-369 passim.

21. Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, 5:391-393.

22. Togliatti, "Rapporto al V Congresso Nazionale del PCI," (1946) Opere Scelte, pp. 452-454.

23. Ibid., pp. 441-442.

24. "Statuto del PCI," Partito Comunista Italiano, V Congresso Nazionale (1946) (Rome: Riuniti, 1948).

25. Ibid.

26. Partito Comunista Italiano, XV Congresso Nazionale. Atti e risoluzioni, 2 vols. (Rome: Riuniti, 1979), 2:764.

27. Partito Comunista Italiano, X Congresso Nazionale. Atti e risoluzioni (Rome: Riuniti, 1962), p. 668.

28. Chiarante, "Laicità, questione cattolica, questione democristiana," p. 69.

29. Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, 5:393-394.

30. Lelio Basso, a non-believing Socialist who was extremely sensitive to the Catholic question and the dialogue has written a masterful analysis of the juridical contradictions arising out of the incorporation of the Pacts into the Constitution and of Church-State relations. See "Per la revisione dei patti lateranensi" (report to the Chamber of Deputies, October 1967), Basso, Scritti sul cristianesimo, ed. Giuseppe Alberigo (Turin: Marietti, 1983), pp. 106-160.

31. Togliatti, "Sui rapporti tra la Chiesa e lo Stato," (1947) Opere Scelte, p. 489.

32. Ibid., pp. 491-492.

33. Ibid., p. 496.

34. Giorgio Galli, I partiti politici, Storia della società italiana dall'unità ad oggi, vol. 7 (Turin: UTET, 1974), p. 676, quoting Togliatti.

35. Ibid., p. 677, quoting De Gasperi.

36. Togliatti, "Prefazione al Trattato sulla tolleranza di Voltaire," (1949) Opere Scelte, p. 551. The themes of obscurantism and intolerance recur in most of Togliatti's articles of the cold war period. See "Rapporto e Conclusioni all'VIII Congresso Nazionale del PCI," (1956) Opere Scelte, especially p. 816. In the Rinascita article "Ritorno della intolleranza," (1955), Opere Scelte, pp. 696-701 he cites as heroes of Church intolerance Giordano Bruno, Campanella, Dante, Galileo, Mazzini, Garibaldi and Cavour (who were all excommunicated). See also in Opere Scelte, "Laici e non laici," (1955), pp. 684-687 and "Tradizione liberale e sanfedismo," (1953), pp. 599-605.

37. Basso, "Il dialogo con i cattolici," (1956) Scritti sul cristianesimo, pp. 84-99, especially p. 97.

38. Togliatti, "Ritorno della intolleranza," (1955) Opere Scelte, p. 698.

39. Togliatti, "Per un accordo tra comunisti e cattolici per salvare la civiltà umana," (1954) Opere Scelte, pp. 644-659.

40. Ibid. passim.

41. Togliatti, "Rapporto e conclusioni all'VIII Congresso Nazionale del PCI," Partito Comunista Italiano, VIII Congresso Nazionale. Atti e risoluzioni (Rome: Riuniti, 1956), p. 66. See also Togliatti, "La via italiana al socialismo" (1956, report to the PCI's Central Committee) Opere Scelte, pp. 740, 766-767 and passim.

42. Togliatti, "Rapporto al IX Congresso Nazionale del PCI," Partito Comunista Italiano, IX Congresso Nazionale. Atti e risoluzioni (Rome: Riuniti, 1960), pp. 292-293; see also Gianni Riccamboni, "Partito comunista e mondo cattolico," Religione e politica. Il caso italiano (Rome: Coines, 1976), p.182.

43. Giuseppe De Rosa, S.J., Chiesa e comunismo in Italia (Rome: Coines, 1970), pp. 63-67.

44. Chiarante, "Laicit , questione cattolica, questione democristiana," pp. 72-73.

45. Togliatti, "Il destino dell'uomo," (1963), Opere Scelte, pp. 1124-1125.

46. Ibid., pp. 1132-1133.

47. Ibid., p. 1124.

48. Giuseppe Chiarante, "Togliatti, la questione religiosa e il mondo cattolico," paper read at the Togliatti Symposium, Rome, January 1985, forthcoming.

49. Vannino Chiti, "La questione cattolica," Critica Marxista, 22 (July-October 1984):126, 129.

50. Chiarante, "Togliatti, la questione religiosa e il mondo cattolico," pp. 1, 5. See also Basso, "Per la revisione dei patti lateranensi," Scritti sul cristianesimo, pp. 128-129 where the Concordat spells out that "the foundation of all teaching must be the Roman Catholic religion, source of all civilization." This required of all teachers, whether teaching public or private schools, and at all levels of instruction, a written exam on Catholicism and Christian doctrine to be given in the Theology Department at Teachers' Colleges.

51. Sidney G. Tarrow and Donald L.M. Blackmer, Communism in Italy and France (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 590-592.

52. Percy S. Allum, "The Italian Communist Party since 1945," occasional publication, no. 2 (Reading, England: University of Reading, School of Contemporary European Studies, 1970), p. 26.

53. Togliatti, "I compiti del Partito nella situazione attuale," (1944) Opere Scelte, pp. 358-359.

54. Ibid., p. 359.

55. Allum, "The Italian Communist Party since 1945," p. 9.

56. Giorgio Amendola, "La crisi della società italiana e il Partito comunista," Critica Marxista 13 (1969): 29, 51-52. Here and elsewhere, Amendola speaks of the widespread fear of revolution, and of the expectation of revolution by most Communist militants, most of whom had been Resistance fighters and were still armed, following the 1948 attempt on Togliatti's life and the disturbances that followed. On this specific period, and the Party's obedience to the Stalinist line, see also the Appendix. See Allum, pp. 13-14.

57. Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, 5:423-426, 451, 443-444, 378.

58. Allum, "The Italian Communist Party since 1945," pp. 11-12. For a further discussion of Italy's position in the East-West bloc context, see the Appendix.

59. Allum, "The Italian Communist Party since 1945," pp. 15-16, 20.

60. Norman Kogan, A Political History of Post-War Italy (From the Old to the New Center-Left) (New York: Praeger, 1981), p. 43.

61. Togliatti, "Rapporto e conclusioni all'VIII Congresso Nazionale del PCI," Partito Comunista Italiano, VIII Congresso Nazionale. Atti e Risoluzioni, p. 884.

62. Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, 5:502-503. For United States pressure and financial aid to the DC, see the Appendix. See also Roberto Faenza and Marco Fini, Gli americani in Italia, with a Preface by William Domhoff (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1976).

63. Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, 5:503, quoting Pietro Scoppola. See also Pietro Scoppola, "Sulla questione democristiana (e sulla questione comunista)," Critica Marxista 16 (1978), especially pp. 132-133. See also Chiarante's rejoinder, "Alcune considerazioni sull'intervento di Scoppola," Critica Marxista 16 (1978):141-146.

64. See Togliatti, "I compiti del partito nella situazione attuale," (1944) Opere Scelte, pp. 358-359. See also Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, 5:503.

65. See Basso, "Il dialogo con i cattolici," Scritti sul cristianesimo, pp. 84-99 on the political goal of Catholicism being, essentially, theocratic rule.

66. Communists who write extensively on the Catholic question are Franco Rodano, Carlo Cardia, Giuseppe Chiarante, Alceste Santini, Gerardo Chiaromonte, Pietro Ingrao, Lucio Lombardo-Radice, apart from Berlinguer and Togliatti.

67. These small but active groups rallied around the following personalities and the journals they directed or to which they actively contributed: Giuseppe Dossetti (Cronache Sociali); Wladimiro Dorigo (Questitalia); Giorgio La Pira, the former two members of Parliament, the latter member of Parliament and mayor of Florence; Don Primo Mazzolari (Adesso); Don Lorenzo Milani (Cronache Pastorali); Danilo Dolci (anti-mafia non-violent activist, writer, poet); Piero Pratesi (Paese Sera); the industrialist Adriano Olivetti (La Città Futura); the pacifist Aldo Capitini; the journalist and Independent Left member of Parliament Raniero La Valle (L'Avvenire d'Italia). To some extent, even Prime Minister and DC Secretary General Alcide De Gasperi could have been included in the group. De Gasperi resigned and shortly died thereafter at the time of intensive Vatican pressure upon the DC to make a government coalition with the Movimento Sociale Italiano (the neo-fascist party) in order to keep the left out of the government coalition. See chapter III.

68. Riccamboni, "Partito comunista e mondo cattolico," Religione e politica. Il caso italiano, p. 169.

69. Ibid., p. 173.

CHAPTER III

THE DIALOGUE AS MANAGED BY THE CHURCH:
POPE PIUS XII TO VATICAN COUNCIL II
(1944 - 1962)Methodological Indications

This historical period has already been covered in the previous chapter where I examined the dialogue as conducted by the PCI. It is therefore unnecessary to retrace here the national and international political background to the dialogue. There are some complexities in analyzing the dialogue from the point of view of the Church because of the peculiarity of the Church as a principal interlocutor. The Church is a complex reality and politically has more than one voice. The following, sometimes overlapping elements can be distinguished in it:

1. The Pope, the State Secretariate, the Curia, especially the Holy Office and the Holy Congregation on the Doctrine of the Faith (this last bureau was formerly the Inquisition); these bureaus are generically called "the Vatican" or "the Holy See." They deal specifically with matters relating to the Vatican as a state entity and to the Church as the repository of the true Christian doctrine and dogma
2. The hierarchy (cardinals, archbishops, bishops), especially the Conferenza Episcopale Italiana (CEI/Italian

Bishops' Conference)

3. The DC as an agent of the Church
4. ACLI and other "collateral" institutions as agents of the Church
5. The faithful (called, since Vatican Council II, "the people of God")
6. Priests and religious orders
7. The laity who are not necessarily religious, but who have nevertheless been raised in a Catholic culture.

Unless otherwise noted, by "Church" I mean the Vatican and the upper leads of the hierarchy.

One can also see immediately a structural confusion of roles in the Vatican: it acts at the same time as a political and a religious institution. Generally then, its pronouncements on religion must be compatible with the physical maintenance and continued legitimation of the Church as a political state, and conversely the existence of a Church state tends to more strongly legitimate the Church's doctrinal pronouncements. Any analysis of the Church must take into account this fundamental dilemma, this "pollution" of religion by politics and vice versa. By the same token, the Church's declared principle of neutrality in politics cannot, given this dilemma, genuinely exist, whatever the declared intentions of the Church may be. On the contrary, in the period under study this principle of neutrality was clearly rejected by Pius XII (1939-1958) who claimed that

. . . necessarily and continuously human life . . . is in contact with the law and the spirit of Christ, whence there results--by the very force of things--a reciprocal compensation of religious apostolate and of political action.¹

Hence, Pius XII condemned "that nefarious tendency that wants to confine the Church to so-called purely religious issues."

Another difficulty lies in the fact that the Church claims authority even over laity who are not necessarily religious, who are Catholic merely by virtue of the fact that they have been baptized in infancy. They thus are, administratively speaking, Catholics and have been raised within a Catholic culture. Needless to say, this involves practically all the population of Italy (over 98 percent by the Vatican's estimate) with the exception of tiny pockets of Evangelicals, Jews, and children of radical anarchists and socialists.

Furthermore, the Church's actions in the political arena are for the most part, with the exception of direct intervention, mediated by her political vehicles. The most important are the "quadrilateral":

1. Azione Cattolica (AC/Catholic Action)
2. Associazioni Italiane Lavoratori Cristiani (ACLI/
Italian Christian Workers' Associations)
3. Confederazione Italiana dei Sindacati Lavoratori
(CISL/Italian Confederation of Labor Unions)
4. Partito della Democrazia Cristiana (DC/Party of
Christian Democracy)

In this chapter I will analyze the PCI's relationship to these organizations only when necessary to illustrate specific points of the dialogue. In Italian political terminology the first three organizations are called "collaterali" (collateral) insofar

as their primary goal, as envisioned by the Vatican, was to ensure votes to the DC thereby creating and maintaining the political unity of Catholics. This would allow the Catholic party to dominate Italian politics, and indirectly allow the Church a continued influence on the new Italian state. These organizations, along with the DC, recognize the Church's magisterium, certainly up to Vatican Council II, even for public, secular life, "not only for politics dealing with the altar, but for all politics: social, economic, fiscal, national and international."² Table 3 on the following pages lists the main Catholic collateral organizations, their function and extent of membership.

An interpretative framework in this chapter is Catholic social doctrine as espoused by the Church and by these organizations in the period under observation. The Jesuit journal Civiltá Cattolica (Catholic Civilization) and the ACLI newspapers Azione Sociale (Social Action) and Il Giornale dei Lavoratori (The Workers' Newspaper) will be analyzed in detail. The former is a recognized "mediating influence from the Vatican and the hierarchy to Catholic groups." The latter are published by ACLI, a paradigmatic type of collateral organization. It is on the basis of its social doctrine that the Church builds its anti-Communist position.

Another facet that adds complexity to the analysis in this chapter is that a Catholic's critical position with respect to the Church's social teaching is always connected

with a project of religious renewal and purification. Thus it is invariably, albeit not always explicitly, a position of dissent not only with the Church's official interpretation of social doctrine, but also it is implicitly or explicitly critical of the Church's role as simultaneously a political and a religious institution organized hierarchically. The Church's interpretation of Catholic social doctrine, while profoundly modified by the values and priorities issued forth from Vatican Council II has, we shall see, been reinstated by Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II. The result has been a dramatic break between the Church's institutional arms -- the Vatican and the hierarchy, and the dissenting groups which literally mushroomed after Vatican Council II.

TABLE 3
MAJOR ITALIAN CATHOLIC COLLATERAL ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	Year Founded	By Whom Founded	1966 Membership	Purpose of the Organization
DC/Party of Christian Democracy	1943	Anti-Fascist Catholics and Former PPI Members	1,400,000	A "Catholic" political party to unify the Catholic electorate
AC/Catholic Action	1848	Holy See	2,800,000	To create a Catholic political leadership
ACLI/Italian Christian Workers' Association	1946	Holy See/AC	1,400,000	To elevate and Christianly educate workers, counteracting the left's influence on labor
CISL/Italian Confederation of Workers' Unions	1949	DC/AC/ACLI	2,400,000	To prevent the left from dominating the labor movement
CIF/Italian Women's Center	1944	Holy See/AC	2,000,000	To organize women politically into the DC
COLDIRETTI/Small Farmers' Confederation	1944	DC/AC (I. Bonomi)	3,562,000	To organize politically small farmers, peasants, and sharecroppers
CONFED. COOP. ITAL./Italian Confederation of Cooperatives	1948	DC/AC (I. Bonomi)	2,100,000	To organize politically small production cooperatives (10,049 cooperatives in 1962)

TABLE 3--Continued
 MAJOR ITALIAN CATHOLIC COLLATERAL ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	Year Founded	By Whom Founded	1966 Membership	Purpose of the Organization
AIMC/Italian Association of Catholic Teachers	1945	Holy See/AC	63,000	To maintain Christian principles in education (about 80% of all elementary teachers in 1966)
FUCI/Italian Catholic Students' Federation	1946	Holy See/AC	not avail.	To politically organize college and university students
MLC/Catholic Graduates' Movement	1946	Holy See/AC	not avail.	To politically organize college and university graduates and faculty
CIVIC COMMITTEES	1947	Holy See/AC	nationally	Parish-based political action committees to influence the electorate

NOTE: Italian population in 1966 was circa 49 millions. Since 1966, there has been a reduction in these membership figures, in line with a general reduction in associationistic practices. Please note also that many individuals hold simultaneous membership in more than one organization

SOURCES: Giorgio Galli and Alfonso Prandi, Patterns of Political Participation in Italy, 1946-1963 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 183-188, 222-223 and passim; Giorgio Galli, Il Bipartitismo imperfetto (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1966), pp. 197-198; Joseph La Palombara, Interest Groups in Italian Politics (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 126-172 passim.

Major Categories of Catholic Thought

Catholic social-political ideology can be separated into four main categories: Before Vatican Council II, we have traditional thought, the acceptance of Catholic social doctrine and opposition to the dialogue, and progressive/reformist thought, the critical acceptance of Catholic social doctrine and sympathy with some socialist goals along with a cautious opening to the dialogue. After the Council, we have neo-integrist thought, the reassertion of a traditional acceptance of the doctrine and opposition to the dialogue, and laicized, or diaspora, thought, the rejection of the doctrine as obsolete and inadequate and the adoption of some form of Marxism.

These interpretations of Catholic social doctrine and consequent political alignments and degrees of openness to the dialogue will be analyzed. For example, dissenting groups such as ACLI left, CISL left and Christians for Socialism reject the Church's traditional vision of society. They have therefore simultaneously made a choice that rejected an institutional, hierarchical notion of the Church: to it they oppose a vision of the Church as the "people of God." For purposes of narrative continuity, some post-1962 developments will be anticipated especially as it refers to laicized Catholics.

While this study is not directly concerned with intra-Church dissent, it touches it indirectly for the dissenting groups, who rejected pre-Vatican Council II social doctrine.

These groups opened themselves to the dialogue and generally aligned themselves with the PCI, the new left and the extra-parliamentarians. In sum, the ideological and political spectrum in Italy is limited by the Church at one pole and the Communist Party at the opposite pole. Those who rejected the PCI after 1968 went on to form new left and extra-parliamentarian groups, but did not join the DC or religious groups. Those who rejected the Church, while generally remaining in their collateral group or religious community (for the most part, grassroots, or base, communities) gravitated towards the Party, the new left and extra-parliamentarian groups, including armed struggle nuclei.

Traditional Catholic Thought

Traditional Catholicism is, generally speaking, the almost intact survival of a religious culture which is pre-capitalist. It still survives in some rural and small town peasant and lower middle class strata. It is a mixture of superstition, folklore, "fragmented common sense." In short, it is the archaic religious Weltanschauung that Gramsci described. The sources that legitimate this kind of Catholicism are the authority of the Papacy and of the hierarchy; the magisterium of the Church; and tradition. Society is understood as an organic "social body" where each part exercises a function. The harmonious functioning of the parts generates the health of the entire body. This is also the view contained in official Catholic doctrine. In this view

there are no conflicts; and class struggle is understood only as violence, as a social sin, and is explained as derived from the selfishness of individuals.³

Traditional Catholicism is therefore politically integrist. By "integrism" is meant "the doctrine and practical behaviour that recognizes the Church as having the duty and the capacity of directing every aspect of human life either directly or, in the political field, through potestas indirecta." We are speaking, in short, of a theocratic view of society. Virtually all the Church's activity up to Vatican Council II is integrist. This includes the call for political unity, the assertion of the validity of Catholic social doctrine, the recognition to the hierarchy not only of the magisterium but also of its power in political choices, although it does allow for "prudent discussion" of these issues.⁴

Progressive/Reformist Catholic Thought

Progressive Catholicism developed in the 1930s first in France, in the writings of theologians Maritain, Mounier, Danielou, and De Lubac. It was later operative in the 1950s in Italy up to Vatican Council II. Basically, this is a neo-Thomist view of society, where the magisterium of the Church is still not questioned. Left currents in DC and Azione Cattolica were sensitive to this social analysis whereby, following Maritain especially, Church and Christianity no longer necessarily coincide. One must distinguish between the social and the universal character of the Church (Christendom), and its

concrete, historical manifestations in Christianity. The latter understood as an historically limited witness-bearing of Christendom. Another important distinction is made between the error and the erring agent: the error is judged objectively with universal criteria: the erring agent is seen in the light of the limited human experience of the person committing the error. These distinctions were legitimized by the Council.

While popular, conservative Catholicism allowed the Christian Democratic Party to gain a great following among the urban poor and the rural masses, progressive Catholicism gave rise to a debate with the Catholic world itself. The freedom to err (in traditional Catholic theology, the freedom of the will means the possibility of erring) was taken by some as the primary source for action, in juxtaposition to following dictates of the magisterium. Politically, this means the vindication of autonomous action and allegiances. In the 1950s, all attempts to thus exercise one's conscience in terms of political choices were punished in various ways by the Church. It attempted to purge the left wings of the main Catholic organizations. This included the use of individual excommunications and suspensions a divinis, injunctions to stop writing, preaching, or teaching, as well as internal exile.

Between static traditionalism and social revolution, Catholic progressives are reformists. There is a new reflection on history, as well as a new reflection on the history of the Church, seen as a component of history, rather than the director or maker of history. The relationship of the Church to the world--traditionally, the Church has claimed to direct the world--is now one of confrontation or, in Council terminology, a "dialogue." But even progressive Catholics still analyze society in terms of Catholic social doctrine's multi-class corporatist principles.⁵

Neo-Integrism Catholic Thought

Neo-integrism is a return to a pre-Vatican Council II world view, both religiously and politically. It restates the need for Catholic political unity. It reaffirms the validity of Catholic social doctrine. It recognizes the hierarchy's authority of magisterium as well as of direction of political life. It is a total religious view of society. Whereas the anti-integrism of the 1950s and 1960s was born out of Catholic liberal and populist orientations, neo-integrism is a reaction to changes brought about by the Council. It is a religious revival that arises and parallels the affirmation of Catholic progressivism.

In neo-integrism the community is no longer the historical, social, concrete community, but the "Christian community," identified with the Church. While progressive

Catholics make a distinction between the universal Church and the historically manifested Church, neo-integrists, by assigning to the community an integrating task of kerigma and salvation, accept the distinction only in the abstract, and in effect, erase it in practice. This is a unilateral position that disregards secular historical and political themes. When it does take them into account, it is only because these themes divert one from the search for salvation in the ideal Christian community. The traditional inter-class view is retained, covered over by a theme of vague universal brotherhood. While not directly political, this position implies a political conservatism. The felt necessity to rebuild a "Catholic world," to superimpose it upon laic structures, gives the Church the political function of the "recomposition" or reconstitution of a united Catholic world. Ultimately, this is substantively an anti-Communist and conservative position while, in style, it appears to be reformist. The call for a recomposition of the Catholic world will be discussed in Chapter VI. It is a theme that arose in the 1970s and at present is a recurrent theme in Civiltá Cattolica.

Laicized (Diaspora) Catholic Thought

Laicized, also called diaspora or dissident, Catholicism is the most complex and most important for our purposes. It will be discussed in detail in Chapter V which is devoted to the dialogue in the 1960s. This type of laicism breaks

the traditional schema of subordination of the faithful to the hierarchy. It identifies the faithful as "God's people," and they are the true Church. In removing the distinction between this-worldliness (the temporal) and other-worldliness (the eternal) it collapses the latter into the former. This choice of the primacy of the temporal results, politically, in the affirmation of the working class. The necessity of trying to read "the signs of the times" is a recurrent theme among the laity. For an analysis of the temporal, one does not need theology: an ideology suffices. Historically, this ideology is Marxism. Therefore, a Marxian analysis is adopted, with varying degrees of elasticity as the basis for praxis within a religious experience.⁶

The primacy of the temporal over the eternal leads to a choice in favor of personal and collective liberation for society and for the Church. It is a liberation from the authority of a hierarchy. To affirm the primacy of the temporal, however, may be a covert reassertion of the belief that Christianity is not possible without a secular realm. Therefore, even laicized Catholicism may present integrist connotations. The conversion to Marxism of so many dissenting Catholics has something of the enthusiasm of neophytes. Certainly in this neophyte enthusiasm one can see a transference to politics of a totalizing religious conception. This displaced integrism could explain why so many of these Catholics adopt a new left, extra-parliamentarian, or armed struggle political ideology.⁷ In Italy these movements have

acquired messianic characteristics, with mystical and even millenarian accents. Some of the Catholics who adopt a Marxian-type of analysis, such as, for example, the Communist-Catholics, distinguish between dialectical materialism and historical materialism. They accept only the latter. Post-1968 left Catholics such as the Christians for Socialism generally reject this distinction and adopt a non-dogmatic, humanist Marxism.

Table 4, on the following page, lists the main socio-political thought matrices that have been analyzed above, together with the groups and personalities that exemplify these thought categories.

TABLE 4
MAJOR CATEGORIES OF CATHOLIC THOUGHT IN ITALY

	1944-1958	1958-1968	1968-present
TRADITIONAL	Center & Right-Wing DC <u>Civiltà Cattolica</u> AC ACLI CISL Traditional Orders Civic Committees Parishes	Right-Wing DC <u>Civiltà Cattolica</u> Traditional Orders Parishes	-----
PROGRESSIVE	Left-Wing DC Base Current (Moro) <u>Cronache Sociali</u> (Dossetti) <u>Questitalia</u> (Dorigo) + <u>Adesso</u> (Mazzolari) <u>Cronache Pastorali</u> (Milani) <u>Il Gallo</u> (Fabro)	ACLI + CISL + FUCI <u>Testimonianze</u> (Balducci) + MLC	Left-Wing DC (Moro) ACLI + CISL + Caritas

+ Groups that evolved to different positions.

TABLE 4--Continued

MAJOR CATEGORIES OF CATHOLIC THOUGHT IN ITALY

	1944-1958	1958-1968	1968-present
NEO-INTEGRIST	-----	Right-Wing DC <u>Civiltà Cattolica</u> Traditional Orders Civic Committees Parishes AC Youth Focolarini	Right-Wing DC <u>Civiltà Cattolica</u> Traditional Orders Parishes Italian Bishops' Conference Focolarini Mani Tese Comunione e Liberazione Anti-Divorce & Anti-Abortion Forces Pro-Concordat Forces Missionary Groups
LAICIZED (DIASPORA)	Party of the Christian Left Communist-Catholics Movement (Rodano, Ossicini, Balbo)	<u>Questitalia (Dorigo)</u> <u>Rivista Trimestrale & Quaderni</u> <u>Rivista Trimestrale (Rodano)</u>	ACLI Left CISL Left FIM (affiliated with CISL) Rodano Grassroots Christian Communities <u>Testimonianze (Balducci)</u> <u>Il Tetto</u> Pro-Divorce & Pro-Abortion Forces Anti-Concordat Forces Worker Priests Christians for Socialism (Girardi) Independent Left Group Catholics in new left parties & groups

SOURCE: Adaption and expansion of table in Giuliano Della Pergola, "Ideologie politico-sociali dei cattolici italiani nel dopoguerra," Testimonianze, no. 150 (December 1972), pp. 825-852.

Catholic Social Doctrine

Gramsci's analysis of the Church applies even after the defeat of Fascism. Since the Counter-Reformation, the Church has had a resistant, even reactionary role in Italian society. In order to maintain its privileges, the Church aligned itself first with the aristocracy, then with the liberal state and the fascist regime, and now with the DC-dominated post-1945 bourgeois democratic state. Once the ideological supporter of the vanquished classes, it has become the ideological supporter of the DC-created state machine. It is definitely no longer the bearer of a "revolutionary" message.

Since Vatican Council II and the rise of new groups, there has been a disruption in the Church's once monolithic unity. New groups were formed activated by a new spirit that emerged out of the Council. For all practical purposes, they act as "sects" uttering intermeshed political and religious messages that are revolutionary in content and method. At the same time the Church becomes more and more entrenched in its own institutional reality and in its defense of an ideology that is no longer acceptable to the new sects. Not only is this due to the rise of a secularized, late-capitalist society but, more pointedly, to the emergence of the new sects that are animated by a messianic, even millenarian interpretation of the Gospel according to their interpretation of John XXIII's message.

At the time of Pius XII's death, in 1958, the Roman Catholic Church presented itself, according to Chiarante, as:

. . . an institution turned in upon itself and forced on the defensive: an institution fortified around papal authority, fearful of shedding its aged doctrinal patrimony and its traditional identification with the West and with Europe, unable to openly confront . . . the problems posed by contemporary . . . reality and culture that could inspire it to speak also to the men of our times.⁸

The Church was crippled by the failure of Pius XII's attempts to reassert a hegemony, or in any case a stronger Catholic presence. A "Christian Europe" emerged through the strength of Christian Democratic parties whose rise had been stimulated by the power void created by the fall of the Nazi and Fascist regimes. These parties appeared to the papacy to be a valid tool not only to strengthen the presence of the Church and dam the threat of Communism--referred to by the Church as "atheistic materialism"--but also to correct the "asperities" of capitalism and realize a social and economic order that would be more reflective of Catholic social doctrine. But the project of a "small Carolingian Europe" translated itself, with the opening of the cold war and under the obsessive push of anti-communism in Vatican circles since 1945, in a "pure and simple choice of field" which tied the positions of the Church and of the Catholic world to that of the capitalist West and its system of political, social and economic alliances. Therefore, Chiarante observed:

. . . Catholic Europe would become Atlantic Europe; Christianity was identified with Western civilization; the wedding of religion and politics became again very close, and the condemnation of atheistic communism--that Pius XII had deluded himself in thinking it would be reinforced by the 1949 excommunication . . . served, in fact, to mask the defense of the concrete, material

interests of capitalism, imperialism, and colonialism. But it was just this substantial identification of the Church with a specific social and political system that caused the failure of the Pacellian line.⁹

Catholic Social Doctrine as Interpreted
by Civilt  Cattolica

From the creation of Italian unity (1861), Catholic social doctrine justified successively the Church's rejection of the Italian liberal state, the removal of the non expedit (1919),¹⁰ the choice of Fascism and later of "Western" democracy, all seen as lesser evils than socialism. Socialism was officially condemned in Pope Leo XIII's encyclical Rerum Novarum (1889). Its main principles were reaffirmed in Pius XI's encyclical Quadragesimo Anno (1929), Pius XII's writings and allocutions, and Paul VI's apostolic letter Octogesima Adveniens (1970).¹¹ The first two encyclicals spell out Catholic social doctrine while the third document reasserts it after Vatican Council II. Clearly, this doctrine was developed as a reaction and an alternative to socialism. The main principles of the doctrine are:

1. The absolute right to private property
2. An inter-class, aconflictual view of society
3. The right to form associations, including labor unions
4. The Church's privilege of magisterium, which empowers it to promote a just society in accordance with Christian ideals

5. Social injustice, rather than being structural, arises out of an unchristian attitude of individuals towards others.

This doctrine is based upon an analysis of society that is typical of a pre-capitalist, ideal rural community. This conception can be traced back to St. Paul¹² and is in turn an application of the ancient Roman apologue by Menenius Agrippa. Yet it is presented as a purported explanation of social conflicts that arise out of social and economic relations that are totally different from those of rural, ancient or feudal societies. This multi-class proposal is what is presented as the "third way," an alternative to liberalism and to Socialism.¹³

Although the intent of this social doctrine, expressed in terms of compassion, justice, harmony, peace, inter-class solidarity and respect for the dignity of the human person is laudable, in the final analysis, as Gramsci notes,

. . . it has a purely academic value. . . . It is not a directly active element of the political and historical life. . . . Not a first-priority political program required of all Catholics, it is essentially a polemical argument without political concreteness.¹⁴

Its nature as a polemical argument is revealed in the articles of the Jesuit journal Civiltá Cattolica for the period under study. Its lack of any concreteness is evidenced by the fact that the only policies pursued by ACLI and CISL that supported the ideal of a greater social

justice in terms of defending and extending the rights of the working class were those policies that emanated from the Communist-inspired CGIL and the Socialist-inspired UIL labor federations. While Catholic social doctrine is never explicitly invoked to justify the actions of the DC, it became the basis for the party's political philosophy.¹⁵ None of the DC's projects have been progressive in the explicit sense of asserting, defending and strengthening working class rights.¹⁶ Rather, the DC has developed an ideology that affirms an associative, neo-corporatist, limited state-capitalist system.

In Quadragesimo Anno, the Church of Pius XI places itself as the obligatory reference point necessary to solve the economic crisis of 1929. The right of private property is to remain "intact and inviolate," although its "use" is questioned. The doctrine can be presented simply as follows:

The Church aims to remove from the capitalist system its Protestant ideological mantle and clothe it with Catholic robes. Specifically, to substitute for the profit principle the Thomistic concept of "common welfare" where society is seen as a whole in which all elements, classes included, are necessary for the beneficent functioning of the whole, as long as they cooperate. The profit principle is called in Quadragesimo Anno "the greediness of one's exclusive interests, the shame and great sin of our century . . . and the root of present social uneasiness."

Each element, the capitalist as well as the worker, is necessary to the greater good of the whole. A

harmonious, multi-class society where individuals have the right to form associations of a corporatist nature (including labor unions) is the focal point of the doctrine, based on the Thomistic theory of natural right. Specifically, private property is defined as a "natural and absolute right;" but the state is recognized as the authority which limits the use of property. The propertied class is warned that the right to property carries with it a social duty towards the poor.

In order to arrive at the "best of social arrangements, state intervention may be needed in the sense of owning some industries to limit extreme industrial concentration and to redistribute wealth moderately. The modern state's intervention for the needs of mass society is recognized, but the state will be successful only if it responds to the participation of Catholic citizens who are guided by the Church's magisterium. The Church becomes the reference point for all societies, even for an ideal one that cannot be realized on earth. "For the Church is the perfect society, the universal society and unites all men in the unity of the mystical Body of Christ." The arrival of a new order will include a democratic state, conceived "in the Christian spirit, led by men of solid Christian convictions," a non-egalitarian society under the hegemony of the Church. This social order will tend to do away with the proletariat class by extending the opportunity for small scale ownership to wider social strata, through some mild form of

state intervention.¹⁷

Father Brucculeri, S.J., a frequent contributor to Civiltá Cattolica in this period, in an article entitled "La nostra dottrina sociale" ("Our Social Doctrine") cites Rerum Novarum and Quadragesimo Anno as the "most solid doctrinal pedestal in honor of social and political morality." He polemicizes with the "socialist schools" who, in wanting to abolish private property and have the workers appropriate the means of production, think they have discovered "the formula to transform the universe."¹⁸ On the contrary, he finds that:

--socialist doctrines are a "pollution of the optimistic conception of our being," while Catholic social doctrine "grasps man in his wholeness, as he is in his psychological and historical reality"

--for this reason, Catholic social doctrine eschews those grandiose premises that can only give rise to painful disappointments; and it is for this reason that Rerum Novarum speaks of the impossibility of a classless society

--for this reason also, only Catholic social doctrine can guarantee a harmonious, peaceful, measured social development

--by placing itself at the center, the doctrine is "conservative and at the same time wisely innovative and progressive, not revolutionary, but evolutionary"¹⁹

--"the right to private property must be maintained,

but one must extend property to the working classes." However, the need is felt to socialize some industries in order to avoid excessive monopolistic powers that could endanger the welfare of the community

--Its impartiality to the contending classes makes the doctrine "superior to any other"

--To conclude, if doctrines such as Marxism have had some success, this is attributable, argues Brucculeri, not to the absurd theories of Marx's Capital, but to those "fragments of truth that may be found in it. The affirmation of solidarity, the vindication of justice, the emancipation and elevation of popular classes are fragments of the Gospel."²⁰

The above article is important because it alludes to a direct confrontation with the PCI. It presents the doctrinal justification for such confrontation. The same author in another article, "Chiesa e comunismo" (Church and Communism), mentions that

. . . since 1846 Pius IX acted against that nefarious doctrine which is Communism, highly contrary to natural right which, if allowed, would bring about a radical subversion of rights, of things, of property, and of the very fabric of society.²¹

In those concluding years of World War II Civiltá Cattolica also chose to deal with a series of issues that would clearly delineate the Church's position to whichever government succeeded Fascism. For example, in "L'atteggiamento della Chiesa nelle questioni politiche" (The Attitude

of the Church on Political Issues) Father Oddone, S.J., argues that the Church has the right to intervene in political issues because the concept "politics" means

. . . a set of principles and rules of public life: insofar as politics indicates human activity informed by these principles and rules, then politics cannot fall outside of the moral sphere. Thus, since every political act cannot not be at the same time invested with a character of morality and justice, from this fact the Church derives its right of intervention--from the point of view of the moral aspect of political issues.²²

The Church's role as ultimate moral guide of the state is an integral part of Catholic social doctrine.

The Church is at this time preoccupied with the reconstruction in Italy of a Western-type parliamentary regime, the preservation of the Concordat and of Church privileges, as well as the continuation of papal authority. The journal specifies that democracy and Christian principles coincide, and where democracy is not agnostic it is then acceptable to the Church.²³

In writing about the Bolshevik Revolution, Father Ammann, S.J. mentions that Leo XIII struggled against "atheistic industrialism" by entering directly into the midst of social struggles, so that he could guide humanity towards a "moral end." After the victory of "atheistic industrialism" in Russia, the papacy's task is made more difficult: it must "introduce humanity to a new era." The role of the papacy is praised, and the fact that since the nineteenth century it has been able to "conserve and expand its

powers"; the hope is that in the future the Church would no longer be threatened by the "terror of immoral atheism," but would rather be governed (through the papacy) by "God's grace."²⁴ The article ends with a caveat to the PCI, by reminding Togliatti of the following:

1. The consciousness that the papacy has of itself and of its continued role with respect to history
2. The concept of the intrinsic immorality of "atheistic Communism"
3. The absolute necessity that this primacy of the papacy has to affirm itself--especially in Italy, the papacy's historical seat--even by a direct challenge, if necessary.²⁵

Another article stresses the necessity, for the good of the state, that the Church remain unhampered:

Ecclesiastical freedom is to the advantage not only of religion but of temporal governments as well, and of society as a whole. It is the only way of . . . maintaining social order and of consolidating the states. A state that, abusing its power, chains . . . the Church, not only chains . . . the Gospel, but deprives itself of a most valid support and prepares its own ruin.²⁶

The preoccupation with the political unity of Catholics also is stressed at this time. The call for unity has the flavor of a crusade.²⁷ In a reply to Togliatti's July 1944 speech where he offered an "extended hand" to Catholics, Father Riccardo Lombardi, S.J., who was to become a public speaker crusading against the PCI and on behalf of the political unity of Catholics (he was to be called the "micro-

phone of God") reminds his readers that in Communism "ideology, political platform and tactics are one whole. Therefore, since the Church is opposed to the ideology and to the totalitarianism of the program, it cannot also not be diffident about the party's tactics."²⁸ Immediately after the war articles in publications such as Civiltá Cattolica became more explicit in calling for the unity of Catholics so that the Constituent Assembly might produce a Constitution "marked by the Christian spirit." Simultaneously, Civiltá Cattolica began to question labor unity, where the "coexistence of Catholics and Marxists in the same labor union is not seen favorably by the Pope." From 1945 to 1948, all the political articles were signed by the "microphone of God" and they all point towards organizing and activating Catholic forces.

On the eve of the elections that resulted in the breakup of the DC-PCI-PSI governing coalition,²⁹ Father Mondrone wrote, historically, in Civiltá Cattolica, that "Communism, Socialism and massonic organizations are three armies mobilized by Satan for the execution of His criminal plans."³⁰ The article is entitled "Coei che salverá l'Italia" (She [the Holy Virgin] Who Will Save Italy). This article follows the same tone of the Christmas radio message by Pius XII. All the articles of the pre-election period have this crusading tone. After the elections, Civiltá Cattolica resumes the theme of the unfeasibility of unity between Catholic and Communist workers. This resulted in the break-

up of labor unity in 1948, with the subsequent formation of CISL by DC, AC and ACLI members.

Throughout the 1950s Brucculeri and Father Antonio Messineo, S.J. returned to the theme of anti-Communism and the necessary unity of Catholics. Until 1958 the Journal deplored "coexistence" and "détente," both interpreted as a "weakening, a tiredness, the fruit of an illusion."³¹ When détente manifested itself in Italy in the budding theory of the "opening to the left," a DC-PSI government coalition, the Journal reported the Pope's and the bishops' opposition to this plan. It was seen as a "weakening of the unity of Catholics as well as a weakening of traditional Christian social thought." The opening to the left was violently opposed, and the PSI was blamed for its "close relationship with the PCL"³² Readers were reminded that the Socialists are included in the edict of excommunication because they too are "enemies of the faith."³³ Directly political articles of this type were no longer printed as John XXIII assumed the papacy. They reappeared in the late 1970s and early 1980s under the Church program of "recomposition of the Catholic area," which will be covered in Chapter VI.³⁴

Catholic Social Doctrine as Interpreted by ACLI

In these same years the doctrine was explained and defended by the ACLI weekly Azione Sociale (later to become a daily, Il Giornale dei Lavoratori). The articles attacked

Marxist ideology, though not directly the PCI, at least until the breakup of labor unity. They offered Catholic social doctrine as a competent, more adequate analysis of social ills. ACLI, a labor organization but not technically a labor union, was founded by the Vatican through Azione Cattolica in June 1944. In those crucial years it was the most important vehicle the Vatican had to attract the working class and the peasant classes including women who were just then entering the labor force en masse. From its inception, ACLI was officially designated as being "collateral" to the Catholic party. These articles in Azione Sociale are important because they indicate how the doctrine was being interpreted for the particular situation of post-war Italy, and of how it was popularized to reach the masses.

ACLI advocated rather progressive proposals to the Constituent Assembly. A democratic state, reads an editorial in 1946, should be founded upon the following principles:

Industrial reform, where industry would be at the service of the community. This implied a limited form of socialism

Workers' participation in factory management and profit sharing

Land reform, including the abolition of latifundia and redistribution of land to landless peasants

Labor unions should be institutions of public law, thereby making union contracts into law, limiting strikes

The creation of cooperatives for consumers, farmers,

sharecroppers, housing, credit, small industry, craft making

Tax reform: a progressive tax system to benefit the poor and to benefit small private enterprise

Insurance reforms for old age, unemployment, and welfare pensions

Educational reforms, especially the formation of a network of vocational and trade schools

Low-cost housing

The right to work to be guaranteed in the Constitution. The right of work is a corollary of the right to life; a corollary to this is the abolition of monopolies that control and reduce employment

A family salary. The breadwinner's salary must suffice to the whole family: the mother must not be forced to work in order to support herself and the children

Family income supplements for the same reason as above

The principle that everyone has a right to private property. Work and capital are two necessary factors or poles of production, but work is the preeminent factor, and ought to be so recognized by profit sharing.

"We want neither private capitalism"--concludes the editorial--"nor state capitalism, but a system where everyone can be an owner."³⁵

Another article of the same period rejects a liberal economy as "the cause of injustice," as well as a collectivist

economy, as "the cause of servitude," in favor of "an associative and solidaristic economy" which would especially favor the masses. The state must be democratic and at the same time confessional for, in DC Secretary General De Gasperi's words, "Communism does not correspond to the true spirit of the Italian people." At the same time, the article recognizes that men are intelligent and free, being created in the image of God, and that therefore work is a highly moral human activity.³⁶

In 1950 Azione Sociale again reaffirmed its identification with traditional Catholic social doctrine. Rerum Novarum is hailed as the magna charta of Christian social doctrine. Leo XIII denounced the "monopoly of production . . . by which a minute number of extra-rich people impose upon the proletarian masses a yoke only slightly less burdensome than servitude." But Leo XIII rejected a socialist solution because it is anti-religious and materialist: It would "disrupt the whole social fabric." The Pope did, however, recognize that

. . . liberalism (the individualist and anarchic conception of property and of economic activity) is responsible for social injustices; but socialism is also in error because it wants to suppress private property in order to concentrate it into the collectivity.³⁷

Following St. Thomas, Leo XIII defended private property and social order. The concept of "class struggle" was rejected in favor of a harmonious multi-class structure where everyone would do his duty and respect the other classes

and where the state would protect the rights of the workers. Leo XIII recognized, the article continues, the right of workers to unite into labor associations.³⁸

In the same issue, another article hails Quadragesimo Anno as completing the principles set forth in Rerum Novarum. The encyclical proposed legislation that would outlaw strikes and require court settlement of labor disputes. It pointed out that workers and capitalists have reciprocal rights and duties. It was in favor of a just redistribution of wealth created by production. It wanted to guarantee social peace, adequate rest time for workers, and job protection. The encyclical was in favor of welfare measures for the old, the sick, and the disabled; and it claimed the right of the Church to propose legislation in the social field. While it reaffirmed the absolute right to private property, it did make a distinction between individual private property and "privatistic private property." It criticized the latter, and it favored social property. A distinction was similarly made between social property and "collectivistic property." This whole article is divided into three parts: (1) an analysis of the social question; (2) arguments rejecting socialism; and (3) arguments in favor of a "Christian" solution to the social question.³⁹

On class struggle, a 1946 article makes the point that Rerum Novarum allows for strike actions when they are legitimately used, as a weapon of self defense and to further

social justice. The encyclical, however, rejects strikes when they are part of "a systematic struggle that becomes a principle, that is, . . . when these actions are based upon historical materialism," i.e. on the notions that the class struggle is a necessity, given that man is by nature driven by material interests; and that the capitalist class must be eliminated by any means whatever. The Church condemns capitalism, but it also condemns the theory of determinism that denies freedom of the will.⁴⁰

Another 1946 article is in favor of a moderate version of workers' councils in which workers have non-binding power of advice management on production, but not on administrative and commercial matters. This would limit the right of private property, which includes the freedom to dispose freely and absolutely of one's property. At the same time, professional and work-category associations are free to exist even as is organized labor. ACLI is in favor of labor unity, but it attacks the PCI's perceived "instrumentalization of unions as tools of agitation and struggle." ACLI defines itself as a "pre-union organization that has the social goal of elevating and educating workers in a Christian spirit." It accepts Pius XII's warning to ACLI to make sure that "labor unions do not deviate from their field and become . . . a tool of class struggle or a tool of party interests."⁴¹

As the cold war progressed, ACLI became more polemical with respect to the PCI and with Communist doctrine. For

example, an article written in 1949 by then ACLI President Ferdinando Storchi, entitled "Un cristianesimo integrale" (An Integral Christianity) as well as Father Luigi Civardi's 1949 article "Ci dimostrino i comunisti che non sono materialisti" (Let the Communists Show Us that They Are Not Materialists) commented favorably on the excommunication edict of that year.⁴²

The Church and the Party of
Christian Democracy

According to Sidney Tarrow, the power of the Church and of the DC that represents it is an integral part of Italy's peculiar form of modernization. The DC's political power is an intrinsic function of Italian economic development. In large part the result of DC governance, the Italian state since 1948, according to Tarrow, has become a neo-corporatist state, a form of neo-capitalism. The development of public neo-capitalism has occurred alongside with the DC's growing power. In fact, the Christian Democrats have colonized whole state and para-state sectors. They were able to tie the interests of certain corporatist groups to those of the state, thereby acquiring an essential role in the economic development of the country.⁴³ If the DC is guided in its political vision by Catholic social doctrine, this ought to be one practical outcome of such a doctrine.

Notwithstanding the so-called "secularization, autonomy and laicity" the Christian Democratic Party purportedly acquired as of the late 1950s, it substantially remains a confessional

party in the generally accepted meaning of the term. The cultural and ideological formation of its leaders, the character of the culture and subculture whence its ideological-political stance is derived, the clearly privileged position it enjoys with ecclesiastical authorities, all reflect its Church connections. Whenever the unity of the Catholic world is in danger, the last word is always that of the Church hierarchy.⁴⁴ Along with these reasons, there is another motive related to the role and function of the state and the party in the present system.

Like other mass parties that are either social-democratic, liberal or conservative, the DC wants to "reproduce capitalist society," but this goal is "subordinated to the goal of guaranteeing a Catholic hegemony on society." It is this goal that is at work in what has been called the "distorted" or "perverted" Italian model of economic and political development, notes Filippo Mazzonis.⁴⁵ According to Alfonso Prandi and Giorgio Galli, among many others,

. . . the intervention of the Church hierarchy in Italian political life since 1945 has been constant and intense and has taken on the aspect of a continuous religious education.⁴⁶

The Christian Democratic Party was born in 1943 as a popular, anti-fascist, peasant party with a reform platform and a populist ideology. In its constitution, the party defined itself as "a party of believers whose goal is the construction of a state inspired by Christian principles."⁴⁷ The Party quickly consolidated itself into the

party of the bourgeoisie based on anti-Communism. In criticizing what he considered a betrayal of the original goals of the Party, left-wing Christian Democrat Giuseppe Dossetti noted that "within a few months [of its founding] the reformist push was contained, then compressed, and has now been suffocated."⁴⁸ According to Paolo Spriano, in the course of 1945 the Vatican and the Catholic organizations oriented themselves decisively for an unconditional support of the DC as the "Catholic" party. The Church's growing preoccupation with Communism undoubtedly contributed to the choice and consolidation of the DC as "its" party.⁴⁹

The Vatican's "mandate" to the DC, however, never has been total or received without question; but it cannot be denied that even in the present the Church has hegemony over the Party and the DC, in turn, has prime influence over those Catholic groups that were formed or pressured by the Church into collateral action. These Catholic associations had been created with the express purpose of combating the worldwide Socialist movement. During the fascist regime, the task of mobilization and guidance of Italian anti-Communism was given to Azione Cattolica. After 1945 it was shifted to the DC.⁵⁰ Following are the main instances of direct Church interference in Italian political life, most of the times through the DC acting as intermediary. If we take the Church's actions as flowing out of its general theoretical positions, the following cases ought to be considered as pragmatic applications of Catholic social doctrine:

1. The creation of ACLI in 1944
2. Pressures upon the DC and the Vatican's adoption of it as the "Catholic party" (1945-1946)
3. Pressures upon the DC and the Partito d'Azione (Action Party) to incorporate the Concordat into the Constitution (1947)
4. Pressures upon ACLI and DC to break up the united labor federation (CGIL) and to form the Catholic-controlled CISL (1948-1949)
5. Direct pressure upon the electorate to vote DC under penalty of religious sanctions, especially in the 1948 elections, the divorce referendum of 1974 and the abortion referendum of 1981
6. Excommunication of Communists, Socialists and their sympathizers. The edict, passed in July 1949, has never been officially revoked and was still referred to as having full force in 1966. While applicable world-wide, it was used mostly in Italy as a tool of intimidation.⁵¹
7. Pressures upon the DC to break the coalition government with PSI and PCI that was in existence since 1944 (1947)
8. Direct expulsion of ACLI, AC, AC-Youth and CISL left-wing cadres in the 1950s
9. The formation of Civic Committees under the direction of Luigi Gedda, an AC and DC official, to directly influence the electorate at the parish level in 1947 through the 1970s
10. Pressures upon the DC to form a coalition government with the neo-fascist party Movimento Sociale Italiano (Italian Social Movement) and with the right-wing monarchic parties

PDIUM and PNM. The maneuver failed but led to De Gasperi's resignation from public life in 1952

11. Pressures upon the DC to pass the so-called "swindle law." The law would have superseded representative parliamentary law in favor of the party winning a relative majority being automatically awarded another fifteen percent representation if that party reached, with the coalition of minor supporting parties, a fiftyone percent majority. The law would have thus ensured an absolute, continuous majority rule for the DC. The maneuver undertaken in 1952-1953 failed
12. Pressures upon the DC to reject the DC left-wing (Aldo Moro's group) proposal for a center-left coalition government with the Socialist Party. The maneuver failed and Moro headed the first center-left government in 1962. Pope John XXIII is credited with lifting the veto against the "opening to the left"⁵²
13. The repression of left-wing DC leaders (Wladimiro Dorigo, Giuseppe Dossetti, Giorgio La Pira), who were the fore-shadows of the dialogue along with Don Primo Mazzolari, Don Lorenzo Milani, and the Communist-Catholics Movement (Italo Balbo and Franco Rodano).⁵³

After 1945 there were two main currents in DC: one was the De Gasperi-Cardinal Montini current. Montini became Pope Paul VI in 1963; he favored a modicum of autonomy from the hierarchy, an alliance with laic parties, and the opening to the left. The Civiltà Cattolica-Cardinal Ottaviani current which, having

revoked their support of the pre-fascist liberal laic parties PRI and PLI, demanded the subordination of militants to the Curia and to the Italian Bishops' Conference (CEI). This faction wanted an anti-Communist front to be secured by a DC alliance with the center-right and the neo-Fascists. This current criticized the DC's refusal to pass exceptional laws against the PCI, as well as the DC's refusal to support a "Catholic" state. It was this faction that was responsible for removing Montini from the Curia.⁵⁴

In effect the DC, rather than being a traditional mass party can be best characterized as a congerie of diverse interest groups tied together by vague "mythical-practical concepts" such as: "Christian society," "the Christian state," and "Christian politics." It remained united by the practice of collateralism, i.e. the unifying influence of the Church.⁵⁵

Left-Wing Currents in the Party of Christian Democracy

In the 1950s, the Church reached its maximum political power but at that time began to lose the credibility it had been able to build with the masses. Very simply, the peasant class nearly disappeared, transformed into a lumpen-proletariat and a lower middle class. Although the Party appeared to be monolithic, in the four main Catholic collateral associations small groups arose with unconventional ideas. In these groups there arose the conviction that the Church must confront society in a new way. This made them receptive to new cultural currents and gave them a certain ideological

independence. Although they can be defined as progressive-reformist, these groups, however, still move within traditional and integrist theological, political and philosophical forms. There is sympathy with some socialist goals but not with a Marxian analysis. Therefore they cannot as yet participate in the Communist-Catholic dialogue.⁵⁶ They stand between both interlocutors, and are not sufficiently powerful to force their way in. A brief exposition of the main groups follows.

I Galli (Journal "Il Gallo")

These are a strictly religious revival group, but they are also among the first in Italy to debate critically some of the issues and ideas that were to be discussed at Vatican Council II. Such issues were the need to enter into a dialogue with non-believers, both in theory and in practice, and the preoccupation with coming to terms with Communists. Although this debate took place within a clear anti-Marxist and anti-Communist perspective, the distinction John XXIII was to make in Pacem in Terris (1963) between the error and the errant was anticipated, deriving from current French theological developments. Finally, the search for an autonomy of the laity and the affirmation, at least in principle, of Catholic political pluralism was stressed by this group.⁵⁷

The articles and debates they initiated were not explicitly political. Their point of departure and of arrival and the terminology they used, along with their primary concerns, were always those of faith, of the need to read and apply anew the Gospel. For example, they rejected the concept of class

struggle because, in their view, social conflict arises out of individual selfishness and out of changes in the means of production, therefore it cannot be eradicated.⁵⁸

Don Primo Mazzolari (Journal "Adesso")

Mazzolari, an armed Resistance fighter during World War II and one of the founders of DC, never separated the political elements from the religious, pastoral element. His continuous, courteous polemic with the PCI implied a willingness to cooperate concretely with the Communist Party. This willingness, said Mazzolari, did not mean "lack of faith in Christian contents, or doctrinal acceptance of Marxism but, rather, the discovery of the spiritual density of these so-called atheists."⁵⁹

Mazzolari's actions all tended towards creating a new Christian conscience. For him, it was a pastoral, not a directly political problem. His writings in Adesso in the late 1940s and early 1950s were humanist, not directly political. Thus he easily found himself united with the PCI on issues of peace and poverty. He criticized the political unity of Catholics and read revolutionary meanings in the Gospel. The possibility of an entente, alliance, or convergence with the Communists was based for Mazzolari on common social values and on a project of completely liberating man within a new social system. For Mazzolari, a belief or lack of belief in a transcendent reality and in Christian mysteries does not invalidate the possibility of reaching a political entente with non-believ-

ing Communists. Against the explicit position of Pius XII, he argued that the Christian society/Socialist society confrontation is a false dilemma, and that Western Christianity ought not to be identified with Western civilization. Similarly, one ought to distinguish between doctrinal and historical Christianity.

In a 1950s debate with M. P. Lajolo of the PCI, they both renounced a priori to reject the metaphysical/doctrinal positions of the other debater. They accepted each other's criticisms; they reciprocally refused any integrist position. In their diversity, they found common elements. For example, while for Lajolo history is the fruit of ideas, for Mazzolari it is the fruit of the "Idea"; and while Communists want to insert ideas in the temporal, Mazzolari wants to discover the "Idea" in the presence of the temporal. The debate, based on a non-dogmatic methodology, and the issues that were broached, was a precursor of the dialogue that was to take place in the 1960s. This predecessor of the dialogue and of Catholic dissent, who had a "vague class consciousness, motivated evangelically," was seen as dangerous by the Vatican. Upon his bishop's orders, Mazzolari's journal was suppressed. In 1953 the Holy Office enjoined Mazzolari from writing or preaching. Mazzolari obeyed. One of the first public gestures of John XXIII as Pope was to receive Mazzolari privately, thus reinstating him fully.⁶⁰

Wladimiro Dorigo (Journal "Questitalia")

Dorigo is politically a more complex figure than Mazzolari. A member of the left-wing "La Base" group of the DC, he was active from the early 1950 to the 1970s, first by publishing in 1954 to 1956 Il Popolo del Veneto, suppressed by his bishop, and later Questitalia, which Dorigo founded in 1958 and closed in 1970. An anti-clerical, progressive Catholic, he was influenced by Mounier, Gaetano Salvemini and Maritain and moved in the same left DC circles as Giuseppe Dossetti, Adriano Olivetti, Mazzolari and Milani.

An anti-integrist, Dorigo refused to recognize that there could exist a "Catholic ideology" valid for all societies and for all times. Especially, he refused to extract a social doctrine from Christian religion because of the "impossibility of wedding moral theology to financial and economic techniques."⁶¹ Dorigo's mind had a scientific bent. His intellectual method was inductive, de-ideologizing, and tended to historicize and sociologize issues. When the PSI-DC government became a reality in 1963, he denounced it as a caricature of the reforms that had been envisioned to obviate the economic, administrative, and democratic distortions of the capitalist system. He criticized the PSI for having become reformist and having bowed to DC pressures in order to be accepted into the governing coalition. Questitalia tended towards what was to become a new-left view of Italian politics. He was to be one of the first promoters of the Catholic

"spontaneous groups" for a new left.⁶²

Dorigo's arguments against engaging in the 1960s dialogue with the PCI imply the refusal to accept any Catholic integrist position. He saw the dialogue in the way it was being conducted by the journal Testimonianze as a dialogue between two integrisms. It was therefore a sterile exercise. Specifically, he denounced the tendency in the left, especially in the Communist Party, to see the DC as an organic expression of Italian Catholicism and as a legitimate guarantor of the right of the Church to intervene in political life. He saw the PCI as having bowed to the blackmail of being called a fomenter of "religious strife," and he saw Togliatti's politics of "extended hand" and of dialogue with "Catholics insofar as they are Catholic" as a strategy that contributed to maintaining the power of the Catholic party, the very party whose first aim, he argued, was to prevent a democratic renewal of Italian society.⁶³ The explicit political platform of Questitalia and of Dorigo called for the following changes:

- Administrative reforms
- Decentralization of government and of its agencies' functions
- Educational reforms to make the system laic and autonomous of both government and Church
- Land reform and urban planning
- Reform of the tax system
- Public ownership of large key industries

Giuseppe Dossetti (Journal "Cronache Sociali")

The Dossetti circle in the DC was more religiously motivated than was Dorigo's. It tried to deepen the relationship of faith to politics within a Maritainian frame of thought. A member of the Constituent Assembly, Dossetti left politics in the 1950s to enter a religious order. He idealised a "Christian state where religion and morality would have supremacy over politics and over the economy." At the same time, he advocated the political autonomy of Catholics. He accused the DC of having failed at the project of constructing a Christian state. His views therefore are integrist, and while he favored large socialization programs, he essentially accepted Catholic social doctrine.⁶⁴

Less central figures and groups of the DC left are Giorgio La Pira and the Movimento Sociale Cristiano (Christian Social Movement). La Pira, a member of the Constituent Assembly and a DC mayor of Florence, was very active in the 1950 with dialogues, writings, debates, contacts with the left spectrum and with the Soviet Union. A deeply religious mystic, he organized symposia in Florence, the International Congresses for Civilization and Peace. He favored the opening to the left, showed concern for the poor and the workers, and requisitioned empty dwellings for the homeless. During strikes he openly sided with the workers. He was one of the inspirers of the religious group Il Cenacolo (The Last

Supper) from which Testimonianze, the most important journal of the dialogue, was born.⁶⁵

The Christian Social Movement was founded in 1943 by AC youths inspired by Emmanuel Mounier's journal Esprit. They were in favor of the government ownership of banks and key industries in a decentralized system controlled by the communities. They idealized political action as being founded upon a "natural morality refined and honed by Christianity." They opposed state capitalism and Marxist ideology, especially the theory of class struggle. Because of strong Vatican reservations, the group was dissolved in 1946 but was absorbed by the left-wing DC, while some members were enrolled in the PCI.

In general, there was a sense of crisis in these groups. They were aware that the hope of building through the DC a different society was failing. They came to recognize the failure of Catholic social doctrine as the "third way." Yet, one could not see that, given the momentous social, economic and political changes which were then just beginning, a totally new approach was becoming imperative.⁶⁶

Throughout the 1950s the PCI was interested in a close relationship with Catholic groups but believed that a Catholic movement could not rebel against the Church without ceasing to be Catholic. Therefore it chose as interlocutors the DC's more moderate left wing (Amintore Fanfani and Aldo Moro) rather than the newer groups described above. These, in different ways, had incurred the explicit displeasure of the hierarchy. The PCI followed the same strategy in choosing as interlocutors the more moderate sectors in ACLI, CISL and AC. Essentially.

there is in the PCI a refusal to assign any value to the hope of these religiously motivated Catholics to remove the masses from being under the grip of the Church, thereby renewing faith as an independent, pure act of consciousness, not constrained by an institution. The desire to avoid any clash with the Church is clear for all issues that concern the Concordat, divorce, abortion, schools, and religious instruction in the schools. The PCI has shown reluctance in transforming these stirrings into a veritable mass phenomenon that would split the DC and overturn the existing power relations on behalf of a left political alternative (PCI-PSI government.)⁶⁷ Both main parties to the dialogue chose to deal with each other and not with small groups because each seem to prefer a stable, responsible respondent.

Franco Rodano and the Movement of
Communist-Catholics

It is therefore understandable that the PCI adopt the political philosophy of Franco Rodano of the Communist-Catholics Movement (the so-called "Catto-comunisti"). Rodano, who died in 1983, was from the 1940s on one of Togliatti's and later one of Berlinguer's closest collaborators and advisers. He is generally considered to be the theorist of the Party on the Catholic question, and on the proposal of a historic compromise. The movement was born in 1937 as the Partito della Sinistra Cristiana (Christian Left Party) which was founded by Franco Rodano, Adriano Ossicini (now an Independent Left senator), the philosopher Italo Balbo

and Ferruccio Parri (later a founder of the Partito d'Azione [Action Party] and then of the Independent Left group). Another member of the group was Antonio Tatò, who was Berlinguer's secretary and closest collaborator. Under Vatican pressures the group changed its name to the Movement of Communist-Catholics. It dissolved in 1945. Most of its members joined the PCI. Rodano was excommunicated in 1948, a year before the general edict of excommunication.⁶⁸ His excommunication, as previously noted, was revoked by John XXIII. The reason given in L'Osservatore Romano for his religious condemnation was "for erroneous doctrines tending to foment division and misunderstandings among the clergy and to place the ecclesiastical hierarchy in a bad light."⁶⁹

In 1944 the Christian Left issued a manifesto, "Communism and Catholics," which spoke of a "Christian 'coming-into-truth' of Marxism." As with other foreshadowers of the dialogue, the group's primary expressed concern was religious:

. . . The Christian spirit inserts itself legitimately in Marxism . . . and secures the real, moral coming-into-truth [*inveramento*] that dialectical materialism as explicitly formulated cannot realize in Marxism . . . Therefore it becomes necessary for the Church to extend its general principles in order to realize concrete, effective political techniques.⁷⁰ (Italics mine.)

The movement was against integrism, collateralism, the political unity of Catholics, and opposed Church interference in politics. It was in favor of an opening towards the PCI. In retrospect, Ossicini saw that the Vatican's preoccupation with the group was not theological but was politically motivated.⁷¹

Amongst others, one important reason why these individuals formed the group was to prevent the DC from becoming the sole political vehicle available to the Catholic masses. From their point of view this would be dangerous for religion, insofar as people would believe that there was only one set of political principles and programs available to Catholics. The group called itself a "movement," not a "party," because they reasoned that Catholic workers, insofar as they are Catholic, do not form a class. Therefore their politics, insofar as workers cannot differ from the politics of the working class as a whole, ought to gravitate towards workers' parties, with preference for the Communist Party.

The group aimed to be the avant-garde of the Catholic stratum of the working class, and wanted to organize them politically.⁷² Their position goes back to the issues of Don Romolo Murri's pre-Fascism party. Murri had spearheaded a movement, connected to modernism. He, like modernism, was suppressed by the Church. He had pressed for political and religious autonomy of the faithful on matters not related to dogma, and had called for cooperation between Catholics and the Socialist Party. The Communist-Catholics, understandably, spurned Catholic social doctrine. They claimed that the Church cannot possess technical solutions to modern social problems and milieux. Specifically, they said, Catholic social doctrine's ideal of small property and class collaborationism cannot be effectively applied to an epoch characterized by a concentration

of the means of production.⁷³

Refusing to derive a political program from a global religious vision, they argued that one of the reasons why the working class had not been organized successfully was that Catholic workers were being led to serve and defend the interests of the bourgeoisie under the guise of defending religion. It was imperative therefore to prevent any further manipulation and instrumentalization of the Catholic faith by the bourgeoisie. "That religion forbids the abolition of capital is a falsehood invented by capitalists." At the same time, Communist-Catholics wanted to contain the atheistic attitude of a substantial part of the organized working class. They were solidly Communist as far as politics were concerned, yet they remained solidly Catholic as far as their faith was concerned.⁷⁴ The Communist-Catholics made a distinction between historical materialism and dialectical materialism: they accepted the former not as a metaphysics but as a "method of scientific analysis," and they rejected dialectical materialism. Commenting on this position, L'Osservatore Romano wrote in 1945 that "the principles and tendencies of the Christian Left do not conform to the teachings of the Church."⁷⁵

According to Bedeschi, Augusto Del Noce and Antonio Parisella, this group, although modernist, is integrist as far as religion is concerned. Insofar as they reject Catholic social doctrine, they do so from a neo-Thomist point of view, from the distinction between the natural and

the supernatural (which leads to their distinction between historical materialism and dialectical materialism). On one hand they de-ideologize Marxism, treating it not as a dogma but, in Rodano's words, as "a necessary lesson." Yet they uncritically embrace traditional Catholic theology. Their use of a Marxian analysis stops at the Church door. In this sense, they clearly are not Catholics of the diaspora. On the contrary, they saw the Church as "one of those deep forces that would give substantial continuity to the state and to the social structure."⁷⁶ (Italics mine.)

Augusto Del Noce, a philosopher who is highly critical of Rodano and the dialogue, and who is one of the inspirers of the neo-integrist religious revival movement Comunione e Liberazione (Communion and Liberation), claims that the historic compromise and Eurocommunism are essentially the product of Rodano's analysis and theorizing and that they are intrinsically different from liberation theology.⁷⁷ While the historic compromise will be dealt with in Chapter VI, Del Noce's argument that it is distinct from progressive religious thought is thought-provoking: for Del Noce's critique is from a traditional point of view. Del Noce, who is opposed to theology of liberation and obviously to the dialogue, goes as far as to accuse Rodano, substantially, of heresy. Del Noce sees the dialogue as "secularized Pelagianism," and secularism as "the collapsing of integralism into immanentism, as in theology of liberation."

In Del Noce's reading of the Communist-Catholics, Marxism and Catholicism are "both true, one on the historical plane, the other on the religious-metaphysical plane." Were the Church to accept a Marxian analysis of society (historical materialism), this will put an end to the conflict between the Church and modern civilization and, accordingly, says Rodano, there will be a "religious revival." But the necessary condition for this lies in the opening of Catholics to Communist politics. What is aimed at is the transcendence of the problem of the relationship between religion and politics, Church and State, by operating a fusion of Catholicism and Marxism.⁷⁸

For the Communist-Catholic there is a clear religious factor operating in his choice of a method of class analysis and of a working class party. According to their 1944 Manifesto, "we are Communists because we are Catholics," they believe that the politically engaged Catholic believer cannot not make a choice in favor of his class and become Communist. Historical materialism, as the true science of history, can provide a technique that can help realize Catholic moral ideals in society and in politics. Therefore, only a Catholic who is also a Communist can lead the way to a true Catholic rebirth. In a way, the Marxist revolution would remove all the false gods, thereby purifying Christianity.⁷⁹

The fusion of Marxism and Catholicism allows Marxism to be scientific, no longer utopian, since it only calls for

the elimination of social injustice, not of all evil. Thus, Rodano's approach is not a revisionist interpretation of Marxism. Marxism is seen as a politics, not a religion; and Catholicism is seen as a religion not as a politics. We do not speak here of an alliance of separate ideologies; neither is it the case of an outright fusion, nor of an interpenetration of principles. In Rodano's words, one makes a "distinction that aims not to separate but to unite." Catholic theology is the only adequate theoretical foundation for historical materialism.⁸⁰ The best possible society will be achieved under the twin rule of the Communist Party and of the Catholic Church. Finally, under this system the Church would acquire a real autonomy as the unique institution whose task is the "kerigma of salvation, the foundation for supernatural life."⁸¹

Conclusion

We can divide the post-war period into three segments based upon the Catholic Church's policy towards the dialogue:

1944-1949: From the "extended hand" to excommunication

1949-1958: Frontal struggle

1958-1962: Abatement due to John XXIII's pontificate
and first attempts at the dialogue.

According to Father Giuseppe De Rosa, S.J. of Civiltá Cattolica, there are attempts at a dialogue in all three periods, but a dialogical attitude appears only with the beginning of

the Council. The opening to the dialogue is dependent upon the Church's perception of the PCI and of Communism. Before 1944, the Church had no direct experience of Italian Communism but only the Soviet and Eastern European variety. Therefore it believed that the PCI would not be different from the other communist parties and, as part of the world-wide Communist movement, that it would have persecuted the Church. The "extended hand" policy had been, after all, approved by the Communist International in 1935. On its part the PCI was persuaded that the Church, under the pretext of religious motivations, was essentially a political force with material interests and temporal interests. For this reason the Church had allied itself with capitalism, the United States and the West becoming, in effect, the enemy of socialism. In retrospect, some Church elements now recognize that the PCI was not against religion as such, but against that Church which was reactionary. On the whole, though, John XXIII's political lines were followed only in part; as of the 1970's, most of the hierarchy and the Vatican were still solidly Pacellian.⁸²

The Church, however, claimed that its sympathies for the United States were dictated by the fact that that country defended religious freedom. Along the same lines, the Vatican's support of the DC was explained not as a political decision but as one made with the same intent of defending religious freedom. Pius XII was convinced that Communists wanted to

destroy the Church: "between the Church and Marxist atheism there was a struggle to death."

. . . We believe [said the Pope with reference to the Moscow radio campaign against the papacy and the Church] that all of this does not happen without the intervention of the infernal enemy [the Devil] who hates God and plans to destroy man.⁸³

The Church looked to the PCI as the upholder of Marxism-Leninism, rather than to its concrete policies which were by no means anti-clerical. The majority of Italian Communists were neither materialists nor atheists. Gramsci's humanist, flexible "philosophy of praxis" and Togliatti's innovative adaptations of Marxism, Leninism and Gramscian thought were just not taken at their face value by the Church.

In the 1950s there was a growing distinction between the top Church hierarchy and the Catholic masses. At this time, the Communist Party was trying to build a bridge with the "progressive" elements. But the Vatican's and the hierarchy's struggle against the PCI continued until at least 1964. Typically of the Church's mentality, the "opening to the left" was seen as a "Trojan horse" that would eventually allow the PCI to enter government. This situation ended abruptly in the early 1960s at the height of the Council. De Rosa recognizes that

. . . with John XXIII there exploded the ideal fire that was smoldering under the crust of . . . hate, fanaticism, and raging negation of a new order . . . New, operative values came out, Christian values that were different from Marxist values but no longer antagonistic to them.⁸⁴

Even if we accept the Church's actions in the post-war period as being in good faith, fueled by an understandable desire to maintain its privileges, it is undeniable that there is in the Catholic Church "an unsuppressable theocratic push . . . which cannot be reconciled with a democratic regime." And while, in the last instance, the isolated Catholic is left to his or her own conscience, the DC, as a party, cannot rebel against Church directives. The Church has never accepted the autonomy of the Catholic laity and has never tolerated that the exigencies of the lay world prevail over its directives. It reserved to itself the right to decide which behavior should be adopted by the specific lay institutions for specific situations.

Even now, one cannot affirm that the integrist tendencies have been superseded by the new orientations towards a democratic and social Catholicism. For these tendencies toward a theocratic rule are the essence of Catholicism. Thus, while the Catholic masses have become more laicized, the DC has had a contrary devolution. It has become more confessional, with less decision-making autonomy and more subordinated to Church directives. According to Socialist Lelio Basso, to understand the Catholic movement one must grasp it dialectically in the contrast of this double pressure operating upon it, and this contrast represents the sincere drama of many believers.⁸⁵ Catholic organizations have slowly adapted themselves to emerging working class

needs and have, over a period of time, become permeated with a sincere democratic conscience. At this point, they have come in contrast with the Church's theocratic vision.

Notes to Chapter III

1. Basso, "Il dialogo con i cattolici," Scritti sul Cristianesimo, p. 87, quoting Pope Pius XII.

2. Ibid., p. 85.

3. Giuliano Della Pergola, "Ideologie politico-sociali dei cattolici italiani nel dopoguerra," Testimonianze 15 (December 1972):826-829 passim.

4. Sergio Ristuccia, ed., Intellettuali cattolici tra riformismo e dissenso negli anni '50-'60, with introduction by Sergio Ristuccia (Milan: Comunità, 1975), pp. 51-52, 48.

5. Della Pergola, "Ideologie politico-sociali dei cattolici italiani nel dopoguerra," pp. 832-833. For an account of the expulsion in the 1950s of progressives from AC, ACLI and DC, see especially Lorenzo Bedeschi, Cattolici e comunisti. Dal socialismo cristiano ai cristiani marxisti (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1974); Maria I. Macioti, "Reflections on the Relationship between the Church and the Christian Democratic Party in Italy," Social Compass 23 (1976):121-140; and Sandro Magister, La politica vaticana e l'Italia. 1943-1978 (Milan: Rizzoli, 1979).

6. Della Pergola, "Ideologie politico-sociali dei cattolici italiani nel dopoguerra," pp. 845-846. Some, such as the Communist-Catholics, distinguish between dialectical materialism and historical materialism and accept only the latter. New left Catholics such as the Christians for Socialism reject this distinction and adopt a "humanist" Marxism.

7. Ristuccia, Intellettuali cattolici tra riformismo e dissenso negli anni '50-'60, pp. 53-57.

8. Giuseppe Chiarante, "Da Pio XII a Giovanni Paolo II," Critica Marxista 19 (1981):7-8.

9. Chiarante, "Da Pio XII a Giovanni Paolo II," p. 8. See also Libero Pierantozzi, "Il Vaticano e il partito di matrice cattolica," Critica Marxista 12 (1974):37-57.

10. Della Pergola, "Ideologie politico-sociali dei cattolici italiani nel dopoguerra," p. 828.

11. Ibid., p. 829.

12. Ibid., pp. 828-831 passim.

13. Ibid.

14. Gramsci, Quaderni del Carcere, 1:546.
15. See Filippo Mazzonis, "Mondo cattolico e DC nella realtà italiana," Critica Marxista 20 (1982):89-121. See also Giovanni Tassani, "La permanenza del cattolicesimo politico e il tema dell'ispirazione cristiana," Critica Marxista 19 (1981):99-122.
16. The only clearly progressive action by the DC (undertaken with the Communist and Socialist Parties) was the land reform program right after the war that broke up the Southern latifundia and extended farm property to previously landless peasants.
17. Mazzonis, "Mondo cattolico e DC nella realtà italiana," pp. 90-92 passim, quoting Pope Pius XI and Pope Pius XII.
18. Angelo Brucculeri, S.J., "La nostra dottrina sociale," Civiltá Cattolica 95 (1 July 1944):3-4.
19. Ibid., p. 5.
20. Ibid., p. 8.
21. Angelo Brucculeri, S.J., "Chiesa e Comunismo," Civiltá Cattolica 95 (5 August 1944):129.
22. A. Oddone, S.J., "L'atteggiamento della Chiesa nelle questioni politiche," Civiltá Cattolica 95 (15 July 1944):67.
23. See Angelo Brucculeri, S.J., "Democrazia e religione," Civiltá Cattolica 96 (3 March 1945):273-282.
24. A. M. Ammann, S.J., "La politica ecclesiastica degli ultimi Zar e lo scoppio della rivoluzione Bolscevica del 1917," Civiltá Cattolica 94 (15 May 1943):224.
25. Ibid.
26. A. Oddone, S.J., "La libertà della Chiesa," Civiltá Cattolica 95 (15 April 1944):68.
27. See A. Oddone, S.J., "Il dovere dell'unione fra i cattolici," Civiltá Cattolica 96 (17 March 1945):337-345.
28. Riccardo Lombardi, S.J., "Una 'mano tesa' minacciosa: a proposito del discorso di Togliatti," Civiltá Cattolica 96 (5 May 1945):156.
29. The results of this relentless anti-PCI campaign aided by the Civic Committees, created for this specific purpose, were 48.5 percent to the DC, 31 percent to the PCI-PSI.

30. D. Mondrone, S.J., "Colei che salverá l'Italia," Civiltá Cattolica 99 (3 January 1948):14.
31. "Cronaca della Santa Sede," Civiltá Cattolica 106 (19 November 1955):454-461 passim.
32. Calogero Gliozzo, S.J., "Insegnamenti del 25 maggio," Civiltá Cattolica 109 (21 June 1958):565-566.
33. Antonio Messineo, S.J., "Cattolici e socialisti," Civiltá Cattolica 110 (6 June 1959):450. See also by the same author, "La politica della mano tesa," Civiltá Cattolica 110 (21 March 1959):561-571.
34. See Alfonso Prandi, Chiesa e politica (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1968), especially pp. 192-198 for an acute analysis of Civiltá Cattolica's political position as the upholder of Catholic social doctrine, of the power of the Pope and the hierarchy, and of Catholic political integrism.
35. "Noi e la Costituente," editorial, Azione Sociale, no. 18, 5-12 May 1946.
36. C. Ramacciotti, article in Azione Sociale, no. 15, 14-21 April 1946.
37. A. Boschini, "Principi fondamentali dell'enciclica di Leone XIII," Azione Sociale, no. 19, 14 May 1950.
38. Ibid.
39. S. Zampogna, "Seme fertile," Azione Sociale, no. 19, 19 May 1950.
40. Luigi Civardi, "É lecita la lotta di classe?," Il Giornale dei Lavoratori, no. 28, 14-21 July, 1946.
41. C. Ramacciotti, article in Il Giornale dei Lavoratori, no. 34, 2-9 September, 1946.
42. For articles outlining specific labor positions that are polemical with the PCI, see, in Il Giornale dei Lavoratori, the following articles and editorials: "Azione e struttura della CGIL," no. 8, 2 March 1947; "Attentati alla libertá in nome dell'unitá dei lavoratori," no. 42, 23 November 1947; "É stata costituita la LCGIL," no. 10, 30 October 1948; "Perché non siamo marxisti," no. 3-bis, 25 March 1948, where it is stated that "capitalism must be fought, not with a revolution but with the union of all workers" and that "an equitable distribution of wealth can take place only directly from factory to worker, but without the intervention of a state bureaucratic machine."

43. Sidney Tarrow, "Le parti communiste et la société italienne," Sociologie du communisme en Italie, ed. Jean Besson and Geneviève Bibes (Paris: Colin for Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1974), pp. 32-33.

44. See especially Magister, La politica vaticana e l'Italia. 1943-1978.

45. Mazzonis, "Mondo cattolico e DC nella realtà italiana," pp. 104-105.

46. Giorgio Galli and Alfonso Prandi, Patterns of Political Participation in Italy (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 168. See also Prandi, Chiesa e politica, p. 15.

47. Silvio Tramontin, La sinistra cattolica in Italia (Turin: Marietti, 1974), p. 140.

48. Ibid., p. 135, quoting Giuseppe Dossetti.

49. Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, 5:503.

50. Filippo Gentiloni, "DC, mondo cattolico e società italiana," IDOC Internazionale (August 1981), pp. 4-5.

51. Bedeschi, Cattolici e comunisti. Dal socialismo cristiano ai cristiani marxisti, p. 215.

52. Kogan, A Political History of Post-War Italy (From the Old to the New Center-Left), p. 12.

53. See Magister, La politica vaticana e l'Italia. 1943-1978. See also Domenico Settembrini, La Chiesa nella politica italiana (Milan: Rizzoli, 1977) for detailed analyses of Church's intervention in Italian politics. Settembrini has a 34-page appendix listing all the main direct interventions, see pp. 457-491.

54. See A. Riccardi, Il "partito romano" nel secondo dopoguerra (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1983).

55. Riccamboni, "Partito comunista e mondo cattolico," pp. 129, 134.

56. Mario Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980 (Milan: Rizzoli, 1983), pp. 37-38.

57. See *ibid.*, pp. 41-52, among others, for the influence over these groups by French avant-garde theologians and religious groups such as Maritain, Mounier, de Chardin, Charles de Foucault's "Little Brothers," and worker priests.

58. Tramontin, La sinistra cattolica in Italia, p. 165.
59. Bedeschi, Cattolici e comunisti. Dal socialismo cristiano ai cristiani marxisti, p. 171.
60. Ibid., pp. 171-196 passim.
61. Francesco Sidoti, "Questitalia e la polemica sui temi dell'organizzazione politica dei cattolici," Intellettuale cattolici tra riformismo e dissenso negli anni '50-'60, ed. Sergio Ristuccia, pp. 203-204, quoting Dorigo.
62. Ibid., pp. 188-192.
63. Ibid., p. 207.
64. Tramontin, La sinistra cattolica in Italia, pp. 135-140; see also Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, p. 60.
65. Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, pp. 54-55.
66. Ibid., pp. 52-53.
67. Riccamboni, "Partito comunista e mondo cattolico," pp. 187-189, 195.
68. Augusto Del Noce, Il cattolico comunista (Milan: Rusconi, 1981), pp. 36-40.
69. Editorial, L'Osservatore Romano, 17-18 January, 1949.
70. Adriano Ossicini, Cristiani non democristiani (Rome: Riuniti, 1980), p. 139.
71. Ibid., p. 138.
72. Bedeschi, Cattolici e comunisti. Dal socialismo cristiano ai cristiani marxisti, pp. 91-92.
73. Tramontin, La sinistra cattolica in Italia, p. 127.
74. Ibid., p. 129.
75. Bedeschi, Cattolici e comunisti. Dal socialismo cristiano ai cristiani marxisti, p. 131.
76. Antonio Parisella, "I Cattolici Comunisti e la sinistra cristiana," IDOC 9 (January-February 1978):33.

77. Del Noce, Il cattolico comunista, p. 5.
78. Ibid., pp. 32-34.
79. Ibid., pp. 43-48.
80. Ibid., pp. 128-133.
81. Franco Rodano, Sulla politica dei comunisti (Turin: Boringhieri, 1975), p. 29. See also Peppino Orlando, "Questione cattolica e questione democristiana secondo Rodano," Testimonianze 18 (November-December 1975):623-631.
82. Giuseppe De Rosa, Chiesa e comunismo in Italia (Rome: Coines, 1970), pp. 160-166.
83. Ibid., p. 38, quoting Pope Pius XII's Apostolic Exhortation of 23 February 1949.
84. De Rosa, Chiesa e comunismo in Italia, pp. 102-104.
85. Basso, "Il dialogo con i cattolici," Scritti sul cristianesimo, pp. 87-92.

CHAPTER IV

THE DIALOGUE FLOWERS IN A TIME OF RENEWAL AND
TURBULENCE: VATICAN COUNCIL II AND POLITICAL/
RELIGIOUS DISSENT IN THE CHURCH (1960s)Methodological Indications

In this chapter I analyze the official legitimations for the dialogue on the part of the Italian Communist Party. They are: Togliatti's 1963 Bergamo speech, his 1964 Yalta Memorial, the Party's 1963 rejection of the Illichev report on religion. Then I highlight the tendencies in John XXIII's pontificate and in Vatican Council II that were interpreted by the various Catholic groups as an authorization to dialogue on the part of the Catholic world. I also look at Paul VI's interpretation of Vatican Council II, which clearly differs from that of the other groups involved in the dialogue.

Subsequently I examine the social context of this period: specifically, large-scale class and stratification transformations in the social structure, including the recrudescence of the workers' struggle and renewed labor unity, along with the student movement and the impact of the Vietnam war on religious renewal groups. In brief, I look at the sociological conditions for the dialogue that enabled Catholics to respond religiously to the opening to

the left by interpreting in a singular way the teachings of John XXIII and of the Council.

Chapter V is an analysis of the main types of dialogue that took place. First I discuss how dissent in the Church is related to the dialogue itself. Then I study the dialogue as conducted by the journal Testimonianze and by Party intellectuals. Subsequently I examine in detail ACLI's evolution towards a class choice, and the positions of the Christians for Socialism and of other diaspora Catholics who helped form new left groups.

The existing literature on the subject treats the 1960s as the explicit time of the dialogue, with the preceding years seen as simply a moment of preparation within both the Party and the Church.

The present chapter aims to substantiate the following theses:

1. To all effects, the dialogue remains at all times a confrontation between two distinct ideologies, developed on an intellectual and problematic level
2. In fact, the "beginning of the dialogue is the end of the dialogue"¹ and, for what concerns the Catholic world, it coincides with a religious dissent that accelerates the already existing malaise and breakup and leads many believers to a class choice and consequent left political alignment.
3. As for the PCI, the dialogue leads to a blurring

of its revolutionary dimension, a stronger constitutional credibility which culminates in the 1970s attempt at the historic compromise (to be discussed in detail in Chapter VI) i.e., the dialogue is ultimately viewed by the Party as a form of practical collaboration with the Catholic party

4. For both the Party and the Church, their respective internal tensions and composition play an important but not an overwhelming role in the dialogue. The overwhelming role is played by political and socio-economic transformations that force both institutions to make some adjustments, but in the course of these, both institutions are leaped over by their respective base membership.

An examination of the events of the period leads me to make the following distinctions as to different kinds of dialogue:

- (a) A "summit" dialogue: PCI-Vatican through the DC
- (b) An intellectual dialogue which takes its cues from the summit dialogue and, maybe precisely on this account, treats the possibility of the dialogue itself in a problematic manner
- (c) A dialogue among rank-and-files of the Communist and Catholic worlds which quickly becomes open political cooperation with a "fusion" of both ideologies in a common political goal and which is not seen sympathetically by either the Party or the Church.

Legitimations of the Dialogue:
the Communist Party

In the 1963 Bergamo speech, Togliatti picked up and expanded the thesis which, after much discussion, had been approved at the 1962 X National Party Congress. This thesis rejected the traditionally understood Marxian interpretation of religion as an expression of ideological alienation. The thesis stated that:

. . . Not only can the hope towards a socialist society develop in those who have a religious faith, but such hope can find stimulus in the religious consciousness itself, faced with the dramatic problems of the contemporary world.²

On the basis of the above, Togliatti called for a "reciprocal understanding and entente" with the Catholic world.³

Togliatti quoted John XXIII to the effect that

. . . the identification between Western world and Catholic world cannot be considered valid, because were that to be so, the Church would lose its character of universality. . . . The spirit of Vatican Council II is in favor of neutrality in the contrasts among states. . . . The era of Constantine and the politics of that era have forever disappeared with Vatican Council II.⁴

This speech is an appeal to Catholics to cooperate with the PCI in opposing the arms race and in supporting the disarmament policy of the Soviet Union. The political purpose as well as the timing are evident, the speech having been made just one month before the Pope issued the encyclical Pacem in Terris which covers the topic of peace. Whatever disagreements there might have been between the PCI and the USSR CP⁵ officially the Italian Communist Party aligned

itself with the Soviet Union on international issues until the invasion of Czechoslovakia, when for the first time the Party officially denounced the Soviet Union's repression of dissent in a client country.

In the Yalta Memorial, which is the draft of a memorandum to Khrushchev, there is a convolutedly expressed disagreement with the USSR CP on the part of the PCI on the issue of religion. Togliatti writes:

In the organized Catholic world and in the Catholic masses there has been an evident shift to the left at the time of Pope John. There is now, however, on the part of the center, a return towards the right. There remain however in the rank-and-file, the conditions and the push for a shift to the left, and we must understand and aid this shift. To this purpose, atheistic propaganda is no longer useful.

. . . If we want to have access to the Catholic masses and be understood by them, the very problem of religious consciousness, of its contents, of its roots among the masses, and of the way of transcending it, must be posed in a different manner than it has been in the past. Otherwise, our "extended hand to Catholics" will be understood as pure expediency, almost as hypocrisy.⁶

Togliatti is certainly referring to the Illichev report on religion which had been published in the Soviet Union the previous year, and which repropounded in "archaic" positivistic forms the necessity of combating any survival of religion. That report had been extensively criticized by Communist philosopher Lucio Lombardo-Radice in a series of articles which appeared in Rinascita.⁷

Leonid Illichev's "Report on Religion to the Ideological Commission of the Soviet Communist Party" came out in Moscow in November 1963. The report--plausibly occasioned

by the echoes of Pope John and Vatican Council II in the Soviet Union--reproposed a standard materialist interpretation of religion as "necessarily, the opium of the people, the tool of conservative rule, or of reactionary counter-offensive." (Italics mine.) The report saw the changes occurring in the churches as "purely tactical . . . a line of defense in reaction to the successes of socialism and of the growing influence of socialist ideas among their faithful." The report was ostensibly coupled with the strengthening of an atheistic campaign in the Soviet Union. Lombardo-Radice curtly stated that "it is impossible to affirm, as Illichev does, that, at least for what concerns Western Europe, religion, as such, kills the element of the will in man."⁸ (Italics mine.)

In an earlier article Lombardo-Radice had indirectly criticized the Illichev report in discussing Pope John's invitation to examine without prejudice the actions of the "errants" and the Church's "meeting" with the contemporary world. According to Lombardo-Radice, he personally thought that the position of a self-professed atheist Marxist such as he was ought to be--vis-à-vis this Church-- not "an ideological confrontation with a class enemy . . . not a struggle between 'values' and 'non-values' . . . but a competition between different values." (Italics mine.) Lombardo-Radice was aware that this point of view implied a modification of certain "classical" Marxian interpretations, but he adds that

. . . Marx does not have to be "revised" for us to affirm that revolutionary values can be contained in a religious-idealistic "wrapping"; but one must read the "wrapping" carefully.⁹

This modified Marxian interpretation however, follows rather than precede the acknowledgment of the fact that makes the modification in Marxian theory necessary. This fact is that

. . . There exist today currents of ideas that are different from Marxism, yet contain a positive charge, such as to move their [Catholic] followers in a progressive sense . . . or even towards a socialist transformation of society.¹⁰

Faced with this incontrovertible historical phenomenon, Lombardo Radice asks, How can Illichev claim that "religion proposes a morality which is diametrically opposed to the principles of morality of the builders of Communism . . . and is, in general, opposed to social progress?" And his criticism goes even further:

. . . I must say in all sincerity that my dissent with the Illichev report goes much further. It has also to do with the way in which the problem of the decaying and extinction of religion in a socialist society is posed, and the consequences of that position.¹¹

This extinction of religion cannot, first of all, be interpreted simplistically. The nineteenth century's "scientific atheism" is the weakest argument for it: it does not furnish a solution. This "vulgar" scientist materialism which is implied in Illichev's position simply no longer holds. Lombardo-Radice goes on to say that it is just not possible to

. . . reduce the persistence of religious sentiments, even admitting that they are a form of "alienation," to the estrangement of the individual from himself . . . or to "surviving residues of capitalism."¹²

In other words, Lombardo-Radice is suggesting that there are real alienating conditions in Soviet society that may be a motive for the survival of religious sentiments in that country.

These articles were to open the way for the PCI intellectuals and Testimonianze people dialogue that was to take place a few months later.

In attempting to interpret this clear shift on the part of the Party concerning religious consciousness, Donald Blackmer, a sympathetic but objective scholar, suggests that the PCI had known all along that to play upon the weakness of the DC successfully required wearing down the official insistence of the Church that to collaborate with Communists in any form was tantamount to a religious offense. In a more general context, according to Blackmer,

Communists have long professed to believe that Italy's fate would in the end be decided by the outcome of a contest between two powerful political and ideological movements, Communism and Catholicism. And the similarities between them are striking. Only they among the Italian political movements have been able to attract a widespread support from the masses, to control powerful political, social and trade union organizations, reaching into all levels of society to articulate ideologies aspiring to universal validity.¹³

Togliatti's life-long efforts were certainly designed to avoid a maximalist as well as an anti-clerical approach that would exacerbate his relations to the Church and sabotage

his policy designed to gradually break down the barriers between the Catholic masses and the left parties. From 1959 onwards, Togliatti was persuaded that the international general policy of détente and of coexistence would be useful to break down the Catholic resistance to Communism.

Concerning the pervasive doubt in center and right wing circles that the PCI was no more than a tool of the Soviet PC, Blackmer suggests that in 1956 the Soviet PC formally adopted the Italian Communist Party's principles of peaceful, parliamentary transition to Socialism contained in the Italian way to Socialism strategy. This doctrinal acceptance slowly became an operational guideline for other European communist parties. The Yalta Memorial and the March 1965 meeting in Moscow mark the end of the turbulent period when the PCI challenged Soviet policies and proposed a new style of international communist relations. The Soviets acknowledged the reality and the inevitability of a "polycentric communist universe" where differences could no longer simply be "suppressed."¹⁵

Blackmer's analysis stops at 1968. As a result, the continued growing independence and disassociation of the PCI from Soviet foreign policy, especially for what concerns Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan and Poland, and the dramatic break effected by Berlinguer in 1982 are not covered.¹⁶ In 1968, for example, the PCI officially rejected the Brezhnev doctrine of the right of intervention in the

internal affairs of socialist countries.¹⁷

In 1969, Berlinguer refused to sign a 1969 Moscow Conference document that called for the expulsion of the Chinese Communist Party from the International Communist movement. By so doing, the PCI was at the same time implicitly defending Italy's right to determine its path to socialism, although the PCI did not agree with Chinese extremism and denounced the Chinese Communist Party as revisionist.¹⁸

In concluding this part, the legitimation to the dialogue on the part of the PCI can be summed up in the following:

1. The momentous 1956 XX Congress of the Soviet CP where the excesses of Stalinism were denounced. For the first time, the Soviet Union's Communist Party publicly admitted some of its errors and engaged in self-criticism. As a consequence, some of its grip on the communist movement was loosened, and gradually the national Communist parties found more space to maneuver towards independence from the USSR CP

2. The "rediscovery" of Gramscian thought that interprets Marxism-Leninism in a humanist, non-positivist mode and applies the philosophy of praxis nationally

3. The thesis on religious faith accepted at the 1962 X National PCI Congress that rejects the classical Marxian critique of religion

4. The 1963 Bergamo speech by Togliatti that popularizes the Party's rejection of a negative approach to religion

5. The critique on the part of the PCI of the 1963 Illichev report on religion. As mentioned, this report denounced religion from a standard positivist point of view

6. The 1964 Yalta Memorial by Togliatti where the "national way to socialism" is reaffirmed and where the suggestion is made that a class movement must enter into a "non-dogmatic, dialectical rapport with local situations" in order to build a "common platform towards the construction of socialism." Coupled with Togliatti's analysis in the same document of the religious question in Italy, we have in budding form the theory of the historic compromise.¹⁹

Legitimations of the Dialogue:
the Catholic Church

Pope John XXIII (1958-1963)

From inception, the papacy of John XXIII (Angelo Roncalli) announced itself with concrete, benign actions toward all the ferments that were emerging within the Church. His first actions--such as his visit to the prisons of Rome, the reception of Don Mazzolari, the removal of the personal excommunication of Franco Rodano and, above all, the reception of Khrushchev's son-in-law and the call for Vatican Council II--were highly symbolic. Unlike his predecessor Pius XII and his successor Paul VI, John XXIII was not a

prolific writer; thus highly symbolic actions expressed his thought. Besides, most of his allocutions and writings are non-intellectual. They have the character of simple, non-theological religious meditations or exercises. Yet, some of the key phrases he spoke and wrote have been seized upon by Catholic dissenters and by the PCI as justification not only of the dialogue on the intellectual level, but also of direct political cooperation. John XXIII's decision to call for a Council was itself momentous.

After the Council of Trent (1545-1563) that had been called in reaction to the Reformation, only one other Council had taken place. Vatican Council I (1869-1870) had been called right at the time that the Church was in the process of losing its millennial temporal power over approximately one fourth of the Italian territory. The Papal States of Central Italy had just been annexed to the Kingdom of Piedmont and Sardinia, and in 1870 the King's troops marched into Rome, forcing the entrance of papal palaces and sending Pope Pius IX into a self-imposed exile that lasted until the Concordat with the fascist state was signed in 1929. Simultaneously, the dogma of papal infallibility was proclaimed at the Council and the Church initiated a policy of greater centralization and greater clericalism. For one hundred years then the Church had followed--particularly in Italy--a policy that had been set in reaction to its loss of temporal power to an Italian government. It was time that the Church take stock

of itself.²⁰

There is a general consensus in the literature about John XXIII that the ensemble of his gestures, words and attitudes, although not followed by great reforming actions, created a new atmosphere. They broke a psychological state of silent opposition; they gave space to freedom of opinion, experiences, and a plurality of voices. Above all, they gave rise to previously un hoped-for expectations. The very freedom he gave to the Council Fathers in the first Council session, became decisive insofar as the schemas prepared by the Roman Curia were rejected. The renewal currents, led by the individual bishops and theologians, especially from countries other than Italy, decisively took the helm of the Council. This is seen in the literature as a sign of respect for man and of John XXIII's decision not to superimpose his will or his interpretation to the course of history. It meant, for believers, a kind of faith that truly knows that the Church, in the last instance, is not led by the Pope but by the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel's words, oft-repeated by John XXIII, "the Holy Spirit blows where it will."²¹

John XXIII's speech on the occasion of the opening of the Council (October 1962) reflects this optimism and this humility:

In the present order of things, Good Providence is leading us to an order of human relations that, whether by the work of men or, for the most part, beyond their very expectations, unravel towards the realization of Its superior and unexpected designs and everything, even human diversity, disposes for the greater good of the Church.²²

In reviewing the major papal encyclicals specifically for what concerns the dialogue, in Pacem in Terris (April 1963) John makes the distinction between theories, which are doctrinally fixed, and historical movements inspired by these theories, which may evolve. The doctrines, fixed by the very logic of their nature, may not be compatible with "dialogue," with Catholic doctrine, but the historical movements may become compatible with a dialogue. The distinction and the emphasis are crucial, for for the first time a historical activity and historical values are fully legitimated: they are no longer subordinated to the doctrinal interpretation of human history within the larger context of "divine" history. The implications of this distinction are the granting of autonomy of judgment and action to political activity:

In the measure in which these movements are in accordance with the healthy principles of reason and answer just aspirations of the human person, who can deny to recognize in them positive elements which are worthy of approval? Therefore, certain meetings on the level of practical realizations, which up to now appeared to be inopportune and sterile, may present real advantages or allow for real advantages in the future.²³

These words were interpreted by left elements as a clear authorization for a DC-PSI government, which became a reality in 1963. And according to Mario Gozzini, a Catholic Senator of the dialogue (later to be one of the founders of the Independent Left group) this distinction "is already operative in the Italian Communist Party."²⁴

In speaking of the Church's difficult position in the contemporary world, John XXIII suggests optimism:

. . . In appropriating Jesus' advice to be able to distinguish "the signs of the times," it seems to us we can detect, among these shadows, not a few indications that make us hope well for the fate of the Church and of humanity.²⁵

Vatican Ecumenical Council II

Gaudium et Spes, the pastoral Constitution issued out of the Council that deals with the role of the Church and its posture vis-à-vis the contemporary world, draws extensively from Pacem in Terris and the other social encyclical by John XXIII, Mater et Magistra (1961). Although the document, like most of the other final documents of the Council, is a compromise between the progressive and the conservative currents, it does clearly reflect John's intent, attitude, and expectations. What is important in terms of the dialogue is the recognition that the "aspect of mystery and of prophecy of the Church as 'people of God' prevails over the institutional aspect of a Church as a 'perfect society.'"²⁶ This is a clear supersession of the traditional concept of the Church as a canonical/diplomatic apparatus that is parallel to, and in competition with, secular society. The Church, in this document, is above all and primarily, the announcer of the "word." No longer a relationship of challenge to the world and of superimposition to it, the Church's new posture towards the world is one of dialogue, i.,e. of open, coura-

geous, friendly confrontation.

In drawing out the implications of this new posture one can see, for example, that a Catholic sociology, a Catholic party, a Catholic education, etc. would have no more reason to exist, if that implied a distinct approach to secular society, counterposed and presented to secular society as an alternative and superior Weltanschauung to it.²⁷ Another novelty of Gaudium et Spes is that it addresses itself not just to the Catholic faithful, or to all Christians, but to all mankind, "desiring to expound to them how the Council means the presence and action of the Church to be in the contemporary world."²⁸

In speaking of the dialogue with the Church's "adversaries" the Council appropriates John's distinction between the error and the errant:

. . . But one needs to distinguish between the error, which must always be refused, and the errant, who always maintains a dignity of the human person even when this dignity is stained by false and less accurate religious notions.²⁹

In keeping with the spirit of Pope John's social encyclicals, the Constitution respects all that is true and good and just in worldly institutions, in harmony with the Church's own mission. Thus, for example, the Council promotes the overcoming of an individualistic ethic; it promotes human solidarity; and it promotes as well the fundamental equality of all men and social justice. While the Church's generally benign disposition towards these social values is

not new, going back at least to Rerum Novarum, the posture is new. The Church is presently willing to cooperate with secular society instead of imposing itself over it. In short, there is no longer a theocratic push.

The conception of history in the Council documents is of secular history as a design of Providence (or divine history). While this is a traditional Catholic concept, it is given a novel interpretation. In Gaudium et Spes there is the belief that the certainty that history is the design of Providence can be the foundation for

. . .the full freedom of man to evaluate historical events without anguish, to accept the dynamic interplay of various factors, to develop the conviction that the meaning of history cannot be deduced from transcendental categories, but must be seized from within, through a reading of "the signs of the times."³⁰

To accept that secular history has meaning in and of itself means to supersede the conception of the Church as a self-sufficient fortress and to open it to the world. In this interpretation, there is a new value placed on the legitimacy of the lay Catholic's non-transcendental reading of history.³¹

Interpretations of the Message

After sifting through the rhetorical, mystical style and leaving aside the self-justification of their arguments based on Biblical authority, we will try to analyze these well-known, oft-quoted writings. It is interesting to see how Catholics, Communists and dissenting Catholics interpret the very same words.

For a Communist-Catholic like Franco Rodano, the Council is seen favorably for it leads the Church to a restricted, exclusive role of bringing the "kerigma of salvation, which is the foundation for man's supernatural life."³² Rodano sees the Council as marking the end of Catholic integrism and of the political unity of Catholics. He sees also the historic compromise as the "irreversible end" of any kind of integrism. For Rodano, Catholicism and Communism are two distinct dimensions; a Communist choice is based upon political motivations, and the Christian faith is based upon spiritual motives. Thus he mistrusted the 1940s and 1950s left wing of the DC, as well as the Catholic post-Council dissent. He refused to create a Christian tendency in the Party and a Marxist tendency in Catholicism.³³

A typical dissenting Catholic, on the other hand, thinks one must carry forward the Council's novel insights into a radically new rapport of the Church to the world, and hopes the Church will promote and support the faithful, as "people of God" and be a stimulus within the realm of the temporal. Such a Catholic believes the inspiration to action must be left to the autonomous, free responsibility of the faithful, and he sees the Church not as a Constantinian institution, but as a "community of salvation."³⁴ Ernesto Balducci, in eulogizing Lombardo-Radice who died in 1983, speaks of the latter's non-ideological, "Galilean" Marxism, and claims that

. . . Christian humanism is now a flatus vocis. Only two steady reference points remain for believers, to which all else must be subordinated: the Gospel, read in a prophetic spirit, and the concrete appeals of the living. In this "no man's land" there are no longer any teachers to be pointed to as authorities; there are no more "sacred books." . . . Only the lazy continue to speak of "Catholics" as if the term had a univocal content.³⁵

Thus Balducci dissolves all authority, except the individual's duty to the Gospel itself and to concrete human needs.

This plurality of interpretations is due to the depth of meaning (as well as to the generality) of the documents in question. It is however also due to the depth of expectations in the Catholic world. Certainly, the dramatic impact of John XXIII's pontificate is due more to his genuine faith, pastoral concerns, captivating humility, simplicity and goodness--in short, his charismatic personality--than to his actual doctrinal elaborations. His dramatic break with the kind of pontificate exemplified by Pius XII is clear from his first speech right after the election (November 1958):

Some expect that the pope be a statesman, others that he be a diplomat, a scientist, the organizer of collective life, or a pope open to all forms of modern life . . . Venerable brothers and cherished sons, none of these people are on the right road . . . What we most especially take to heart is the task of being shepherd to the whole flock.³⁶

His faith in man and in divine Providence is clear from this passage from the speech given on the occasion of the opening of the Council (October 1962):

Some [advisers] seen in modern times only prevarication and ruin; they say our age, compared to the past, has become worse; and behave as if they learned nothing from history which is, however, a teacher of life . . .

We think we ought to dissent from these prophets of doom . . . In the present historical time Providence is leading us to a new order of human relations.³⁷

Possibly, the fact that John spent most of his religious life outside of Italy, as an apostolic delegate and nuncio in France, Bulgaria and Turkey made him somewhat detached from Italian political life. This enabled him to look with more equanimity to the Italian situation. And although he was not as progressive as, for example, the early Cardinal Montini, he had nevertheless been exposed to the new European theological currents. Although he did not say or write much, he seemed however uncannily attuned to the malaise, ferments and discontents within the Catholic world, especially in Italy where the yoke of the Vatican has always been strong. This awareness of the "signs of the times" is clear in his speech of October 1962, on the occasion of the Council's opening. One of the goals of the Council, he said, was:

. . . a doctrinal penetration and a conscience formation that correspond more perfectly to the faithfulness of the ancient doctrine, but studied and expounded through the research methods and the literary forms of modern thought. The substance of the ancient doctrine of the depositum fidei is not the same as the formulation of its [thought and language] expression: to this therefore we must pay great and patient attention. ³⁸

Those groups that had been unhappy with the state of affairs seized upon these words and gestures. Thus the dissenting Catholics found the legitimation for their new way of living their faith. But an analysis of Pope John's words reveals no dramatic break with the tradition in terms of

doctrine. John's preoccupations were pastoral, as well as his preoccupations with the ability of the Church to survive in the modern world without dramatically changing its ways. The changes and tendencies wrought by John and the Council are summed up in a different "church-world" relationship. The Church is no longer opposed to the world, seen negatively in its totality. The Church wants to "come in contact," to "dialogue" with the world. Obviously, for motivations having to do not only with pastoral reasons, but with the survival of the Church itself. It is true, however, that a political and a doctrinal elaboration of the Council's pronouncements favors the questioning of the political unity of Catholics, since to believers is now recognized not only the autonomy of political action, but also the autonomy of ideological elaboration.³⁹

In concluding this section, a Catholic of the diaspora would claim that the following are theologically sound elaborations and extrapolations of John XXIII's and of the Council's message:

- The autonomy of the temporal from the supernatural
- The Church is not a hierarchical pyramid, but a community of believers in the service of man
- The Church is not a juridical, but a mystical, body
- Freedom ought to be given to lay Catholics for a dialogue with the world, including their "adversaries," without thereby committing the official theology to change.

The most important pastoral indications in Pacem in Terris would be:

-The distinction between the error and the errant, with consequent legitimation and exhortation to a dialogue with those who, in the eyes of the Church, are in error

-The distinction between erroneous ideologies and the historical movements that originate from them. These movements can come close to truth, and can have "positive elements worthy of approval"

-The recognition of historical values in those ideologies that may be doctrinally opposed to those of the Church

-Finally, "truth is not a monopoly of visible Christianity; it does not reside on a secular historical plane."⁴⁰

According to Father Ernesto Balducci, founder of the journal Testimonianze, the foregoing are the historical and logical premises for the dialogue on the part of Christians. Given the Council's affirmation of the "non identity between revealed truth and theology," therefore recognizing "the principle of theological pluralism and of a dialectic between different theologies," the Council has made a fundamental option in favor of the dialogue.⁴¹

Pope Paul VI (1963-1978)

Paul VI's (Giovanni Battista Montini) encyclical Ecclesiam Suam (1963) is the only Church document that

details the terms and meanings of the dialogue as far as the Church's position is concerned. In so doing, it gives a notably different reading of John's and of the Councils' message. Although this is a document of the early Montini, from the time when he promoted the progressive wing in the DC and saw favorably the opening to the left, his view of the dialogue is more conservative than John's. Montini was to be subject to various reactionary currents and was to opt for a conservative interpretation of the message. On the subject of a meeting and dialogue with "human society" the encyclical makes the following specific points:

We face . . . the problems of the so-called dialogue between the Church and the modern world. . . . It is the Council's task to describe it in its vastness and complexity, and to resolve it in the best terms. But its presence, its urgency are such that they constitute a weight in our soul, and a stimulus, almost a vocation, that we ourselves . . . would in some way want to clarify.⁴²

On the question of

. . . economic goods, inferior to spiritual and eternal goods, but necessary for the present life . . . the Church's social teachings leave no doubt on this issue; and we take this occasion to reaffirm our coherent adherence to such healthy doctrine.⁴³

This is a clear reaffirmation of traditional Catholic social doctrine. Another current preoccupation of the Church is that of the

. . . contacts it must keep with humanity. . . . The Church must come to a dialogue with the world in which it lives. The Church becomes words; it becomes message; the Church becomes conversation. . . . We will give to this inner impulse, this gift of charity, the name which is today common, that of "dialogue."⁴⁴

For Paul VI, the dialogue is understood as an approach to non-Catholics for purposes of conversion:

. . . Before converting the world, and in order to convert it, we must approach the world and speak to it . . . this is the transcendental origin of the dialogue. It is in the very intention of God.⁴⁵

What Paul VI means by dialogue is the "dialogue of salvation" i.e. God incarnating into Jesus and dying to redeem humanity from its sins. "The forms of salvation dialogue are multiple. [The dialogue] obeys experimental needs . . . it must not be a priori or immutable . . . but must vary, depending on the local, temporal circumstances and on culture."⁴⁶

The encyclical goes on to specify how the dialogue ought to be conducted especially with atheists. Atheists are . . . naively persuaded that they are going to free mankind of old and false conceptions . . . to substitute to them, they say, a scientific conception [of life and the world] which conforms to the needs of modernity and of progress.⁴⁷

The encyclical concludes by invoking John XXIII, in the hope that atheists, especially those who also profess Communism, will convert:

These are the reasons that obligate us . . . to condemn those ideological systems that deny God and that oppress the Church . . . often identified in economic, social and political regimes . . . among these, especially, is atheist Communism. . . .

Although we have no preconceived exclusion towards the persons who profess the above mentioned systems . . . recalling therefore our predecessor John XXIII and his encyclical Pacem in Terris, we do not despair that these people may one day open with the Church another, and positive, dialogue, not the present one that we lament and deplore.⁴⁸ (*Italics mine.*)

Paul VI's apostolic letter Octogesima Adveniens (1970) issued on the eightieth anniversary of Rerum Novarum, reaffirms Catholic social doctrine as if the hiatus of John and the Council and the reality of Catholic dissent had not existed. The document laments that "some let themselves be seduced by revolutionary ideologies that promise, not without illusion, a definitely better world." There is in the arguments of the letter a return to the concepts of inter-class collaboration, of the metaphor of society as a "social body," of the concept of a corporate society with different "categories" or "corporations" competing, from the same level of chance and of power, to reach the "common good." In keeping with traditional Catholic social doctrine, economic injustice is to be reduced by the paternalistic attitude of the élites: "Let those who are most favored give up certain of their rights in order to place their goods at the service of others." The last part of the letter is an open critique of Marxism: "A Christian may not, without contradiction . . . adhere to a Marxist ideology or a liberal ideology." There is no attention to the careful distinction that had been introduced by John XXIII between doctrines and historical movements inspired by them. Also, there is the belief that "class conflicts are not inherent realities of a capitalistic society but rather are the product of voluntary [selfish] choices."⁴⁹

This interpretation of the dialogue is clearly not

in the same spirit as John's pronouncements. It effectively limits any genuine meeting, reducing it, in the way in which it was elaborated by, for example, Civiltá Cattolica⁵⁰ and the Italian Bishops' Conference, to a cautious dialogue between two reciprocally exclusive ideologies, where the fact of the dialogue itself is not accepted a priori but is treated with diffidence. This is also how Togliatti and the PCI saw the dialogue: there is no intention of "fusing" ideologies, but merely of achieving some kind of "practical, political cooperation on common goals." For example, Luigi Longo, who succeeded Togliatti as Secretary General, at the 1966 XI National Party Congress reiterated the absurdity of ideological compromises, and restricted the dialogue to the possibility of a "reciprocal understanding and search for common values and goals," by which he clearly meant political positions on concrete issues such as the Vietnam war, the breakup of the political unity of Catholics, and support for the DC's left wing.⁵¹

Certainly for Paul VI there is, first of all, a complete reassertion of the validity of Catholic social doctrine, hence of the Church's magisterium on political issues. The dialogue for Paul is not as it was according to John: humble, open, non dogmatic. Instead, it has the explicit purpose of "converting" the world. The dialogue is institutionally important to the Church for only in approaching the world can it hope to survive as an institution and to stem

the tide of agnosticism, atheism, and indifference. The dialogue, in Paul's interpretation, is fundamentally vitiated by the belief that it is no more than an "earthly" image and an approximation of the true "transcendental" dialogue, by which is meant the incarnation and death of God as Jesus. This is especially true of the dialogue with "atheist Communism," a "false ideology that is deplored, lamented and castigated." The fact that Paul uses the distinction between the error and the errant, castigating the error but not being preconceived against the errant, sounds empty, paternalistic, hypocritical. Communism and socialism have been called by Paul VI

. . . erroneous and pernicious. . . . The Church cannot adhere to social, ideological or political movements that, taking origin and strength from Marxism, have maintained their negative principles and methods by reason of an incomplete, radically false conception of man, history, and the world.⁵²

Paul has literally thwarted the confiding, optimistic, trusting meaning of John's distinction between ideologies (fixed by nature) and historical movements inspired by those ideologies, which may change.

This is not the place to analyze the complex, tormented personality of Paul VI and his increasingly reactionary positions that were responsible for the progressive spirit of the Council not being fully enacted, with consequent successive breaks with the Dutch and Belgian Catholic Bishops' Conferences. It is clear however, that while John's charismatic personality and his language and intentions

opened the dam of renewal and dissent, Paul VI did everything in his power to limit the renewals previously approved by the Council. One cannot know, however, how John would have reacted if he had seen how the seeds of dissent--that he had watered--were to bloom so quickly and fully. Certainly, one explanation for the vitality and originality of Catholic dissent is that they were not created by the Council. The Council acted as a catalyst for their full expression and flowering. But those dissatisfactions were the product as much of the internal Church situation as of the socio-economic transformations that had been occurring in Italy since 1945.

Social Transformations

Up until Vatican Council II the socio-political ideologies of Italian Catholics changed from a traditional to a reformist, anti-integrist approach on the issue of the validity of Catholic social doctrine and of its corollary, collateralism. The political unity of Catholics rested on a party closely connected and subordinated to the Church. However, none of the non-traditional positions are a major break with the Catholic world and the Church. They do not break with tradition but try to reform the Church from within. All of this changed in the 1960s with the outbreak of religious dissent involving critical participation, protests, demands, and denunciations.⁵³ According to the sociologist of religion, Italo De Sandre, one interpretation of the phenomenon of Catholic dissent views the Church under Pius XII as a perfect authority structure, centering on the Pope and on his charisma of office. John XXIII, on the basis of his personal presence and popularity, went beyond the charisma of the office. He had pure charisma. This brought about a confusion of ends and a redefinition of roles. The already existing subterranean tensions within the Church were heightened by John XXIII's death. In this predicament, a conflict over power in the Church was revealed and Catholics could no longer believe in "perfect authority," i.e. papal infallibility, because they had been exposed to the power struggle that broke out to fill the power void.⁵⁴

This explanation has plausibility but is reductive. It concerns the restricted inner circle of the Vatican. It cannot possibly account for the intensity, magnitude and sudden explosion of grassroots Catholic dissent. That dissent arose among people who were farthest from the Vatican palaces. Vatican Council II was more than a power struggle: it was an expression of deep and continuous emerging currents. We must probe for wider socio-economic circumstances that underly these changes. It is plausible then to see Catholic dissent as an expression of the transformations that have dramatically altered Italian social structure and the social position of the Catholic groups and individuals involved in the dissent experience.⁵⁵ In this type of analysis, Vatican Council II is only a partial explanation for the dissent, although the dissent cannot be explained without reference to the Council.

As any book on post-war Italy in any discipline relates, within the time span of twenty years the country went from a peasant society to a society with advanced industry, a very large tertiary (service) sector and extensive social welfare systems. About forty percent of the gross national product is derived from state-controlled industries. Italy can be thus characterized as a mixed-economy country. It exhibits however most of the traits of a late-capitalist society. In the years from 1947 to 1961, the Italian economy grew steadily at a 5.9 percent yearly rate of growth. In the same period, per-capita real consumption grew an average of

4.06 percent a year, this being among the highest rates of growth in per-capita consumption in Western Europe for that period.⁵⁶

Industrialization occurred along with an exodus of peasant families from the countryside to the city and from the South to the North. The process of urbanization occurred together with a geographical and cultural displacement of the peasant masses. The industrial working class, while not growing substantially in number, grew in power, due to its organization in labor unions and an increased influence of workers' parties. Women were given the right to vote in 1945. They were subject to compulsory education and became workers outside of the home. In 1979, women comprised 32.9 percent of the active labor force.⁵⁷ Compulsory education is now required up to the eighth grade. Since 1969, entry into colleges and universities has been based on open enrollment and education is practically free, thus greatly increasing the number of college-educated young people. Simultaneously, there was the emergence of a new entrepreneurial middle class in the North, as well as an urban lumpenproletariat in the large cities, composed of peasants who had migrated from the countryside and the South.

The changes in social class composition have been extensively studied by Paolo Sylos Labini from 1881 to 1971. His studies show that, as of 1971, 2.6 percent of the active working population belonged to the bourgeoisie, 49.6 percent

belonged to the petite bourgeoisie and 47.8 percent to the working class. Thus the Italian labor force included a lower number of working class members than of petit bourgeois workers. More recent studies show that the trend towards a shrinking of the industrial working class has continued, along with a growth in the service sector. In 1979, 37.5 percent of the active labor force was employed in industry, against 47.6 percent employed in the service sector.⁵⁸

After 1936 there was a ten percent increase in the working class, but that increase has been reduced to four percent since 1951. On the other hand, since 1936 there has been a 229 percent increase of workers in the categories of clerk, employee and white and pink collar work, both public and private. All these categories belong, in Marxian terms, to the petite bourgeoisie. After 1951, that increase has shrunk to a mere 72 percent increase. The increase in the service economy is staggering. It went together with a dramatic decrease in the percentage of people belonging to the peasant class, which, in Labini's computations, includes small land owners, sharecroppers, and non-land owning farm workers. In 1936, the combined peasant classes constituted 51.8 of the active labor force; in 1951 the percentage dropped to 42.1 percent; in 1971 peasants constituted 18.3 percent of the active labor force. According to 1979 statistics, the peasant class has been further reduced to 14.9 percent.⁵⁹ Other figures of interest in the Labini tables concern the

percentage of the total Italian population who is actively working. While that percentage was 55 percent in 1881, in 1971 it was 36 percent, a little over one third of the total population. This latest figure is the result of several factors, among which are the increased number of obligatory school years, the democratization of college and university enrollment, the generous pensions system, and a recent rise in unemployment in the industry sector. The differences largely reflect a change in age boundaries of the labor force.

Labini's class distinctions take only income as a socio-economic indicator, disregarding education and status.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, his studies have been used by both the PCI and ACLI. On the basis of these figures, Gerardo Chiaromonte argued for the appropriateness of the historic compromise to resolve the political crises in the left and in the Church that are the result of these shifts in social class composition.⁶¹ At the 1973 ACLI National Congress, the organization was split between those who used Labini's figures to push for a return to a multi-class policy because of the larger percentage of petit bourgeois workers over traditional industrial workers in the labor force, and the ACLI left which, criticizing Labini's analysis, reaffirmed ACLI's 1969 "class choice."⁶²

Labini's table appears on the following page.

TABLE 5
 ITALIAN SOCIAL CLASS COMPOSITION, 1881 - 1971
 IN PERCENTAGES OF THE ACTIVE LABOR FORCE

	1881	1921	1936	1951	1971
BOURGEOISIE	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.9	2.6
PETITE BOURGEOISIE	45.9	53.3	54.8	56.9	49.6
a. employees	2.1	3.2	5.0	9.8	17.1
1. private	0.6	0.8	1.7	5.2	8.9
2. public	1.5	2.4	3.3	4.6	8.2
b. self-employed	41.2	47.3	47.1	44.4	29.1
1. farmers	22.5	37.0	35.6	30.3	12.1
2. shopkeepers	2.8	4.4	5.4	6.7	8.7
3. craftsmen & others	15.9	5.9	6.1	7.4	8.3
c. special categories (military, clergy, etc.)	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.7	3.4
WORKING CLASS	52.2	45.0	43.6	41.2	47.8
a. farmwork	35.6	21.8	16.2	11.8	6.2
b. industry (including construction work)	13.2	19.6	21.4	22.9	33.0
c. others (including lumpenproletariat)	3.4	3.6	6.0	6.5	8.6

SOURCE: Paolo Sylos Labini, *Saggio sulle classi sociali* (Bari: Laterza, 1982), Table 1.2. (Reproduced by permission of the publisher).

The changes outlined above are part of that process which is called variously "secularization" or modernization. Sociologist of religion, Sabino Acquaviva, characterizes Italian society as having undergone "an unequal but rapid development within quite a short period of time, from an under-developed structure to a structure typical of an advanced industrial society."⁶³ According to Acquaviva, the process of secularization affects the belief systems of those groups and those individuals who are affected by these processes. He argues that these processes of change shift the ground from under the Church. The authority and legitimacy of the Church had been based upon a traditionally religious, heavily peasant, patriarchal family system as the basic structure of society.

The economic developments of these last forty years and the accompanying progressive transformation of society--based above all on changes in class stratification and class composition--in turn led to a change in customs. This fractured the solidity of the Church and, in turn, of the social system. The crisis in the Church, already present in the late 1950s, exploded at the end of the 1960s. In general these changes wrought upon the Church can be distinguished as follows:

1. A crisis in the organizational structure of the Church, especially, tensions between the lower clergy, who are more in contact with people at the parish level, and the hierarchy

2. A crisis of religious participation in rituals as well as in organized, militant Catholicism (AC, ACLI)
3. A crisis in the image of the Church. It is no longer taken as the point of reference of, for example, standard moral behaviour and as a guideline for political action.⁶⁴

Concerning the crisis of religious participation, we can see the appearance or expansion of sect-like groups such as the Mormons, Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Methodists, Evangelicals. Although we speak of very small groups numbering in the low thousands, this phenomenon indicates the growth of religious pluralism, the privatization of the practice of religion, and a dramatic diminution of "vocations" to the priesthood and sisterhood, with the exception of vocations to missionary orders that serve in the third world.

Concerning the crisis in the image of the Church, Acquaviva notes that "the image of the Church becomes indeterminate, inconsistent as the Catholic Church tends to interest less and less the man in the street because the need of Church religion diminishes."⁶⁵ The use of the sacred for magical purposes in Christianity falls: such uses include visits to sanctuaries, reception of sacraments (including baptisms and canonical marriages), the use of indulgences and cults of the saints. Faced with this situation, the Church tried "through institutionally mandated innovations [such as the Council] to lessen its precarious position vis-à-vis those forces that radically change the position of the

individual in the collectivity," says sociologist of religion, Gustavo Guizzardi. Shifts in the meaning of church religion certainly do not depend upon just one set of causes. According to Guizzardi, the crisis in the Church is ultimately to be explained by the fact that one of its central functions, the provision of meaning, becomes less relevant. Institutional religiosity had provided a cultural-cognitive function, it had offered an answer to all human problems, inserting them in a vision of the world that was based upon peasant, pre-industrial, patriarchal value systems.⁶⁶

Several sociologists of religion speak of Italian Catholicism as a subculture. They argue that this subculture originated as a form of opposition to the liberal state that was formed in the nineteenth century. The leading conduit of this subculture was Azione Cattolica and, after 1945, ACLI. The mandated goal of both organizations was to inculcate ideals that would be an alternative to bourgeois values and a design for an alternative "Christian" society. This subculture, based upon the conscious perpetuation of a non-secularized, peasant or small-town lower middle class society, has been literally uprooted by these processes of change.⁶⁷ An illustration of the effects wrought by these changes is the decline in AC membership, which plunged from 2,608,000 in 1966 to 700,000 in 1979. It may have lost many of its members to ACLI, which to all intents and purposes replaced AC. Reduction in ACLI membership is not as

dramatic simply because its membership and its role have from the start been more progressive than those of Azione Cattolica. Being connected to the labor world, it has been able to become the bearer of part of the new working class.⁶⁸ After more than one million members in 1963, ACLI's decline after the 1969 class choice has been holding steadily at about 600,000 from 1976 to the present. In 1983, it counted 518,000 members.

TABLE 6
AZIONE CATTOLICA MEMBERSHIP

1949	1956	1966	1970	1973	1979
2 m.+	3 m.+	2,608,000	1,657,000	816,000	700,000

TABLE 7
ACLI MEMBERSHIP

1949	1953	1958	1963	1976	1983
390,000	808,600	986,000	1,015,400	600,000	518,000

SOURCES: Acquaviva, Guizzardi and Milanesi, "Nouvelles formes de religiosité et développement socio-économique en Italie," p. 161; Cardia, "L'area cattolica dopo il 20 giugno 1976," p. 48; Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, p. 132; Galli and Prandi, Patterns of Political Participation in Italy: 1946-1963, p. 191.

Guizzardi, in writing about the Catholic dissent that results in a Marxist political praxis, notes that the social strata where dissent emerges are heterogeneous. He argues that dissent, at least in part, emerges out of the ambiguous position and transformation of the middle class, the "proletarianization" of certain strata such as marginal factory workers, peasants, small entrepreneurs, and the unemployment of college-educated young people. These ambiguities and a lack of identical class interests give rise to a negative alliance based upon their rejection of the status quo. For the most part this results in the rejection of the faith-politics dichotomy, and is often accompanied by abandonment of interest in religion and by resort into direct political action. This "conversion" entails the abandonment of multi-class politics that had been based upon traditional Catholic social doctrine, and the adoption of a class struggle politics.⁶⁹ Sociologist of religion Parisi notes, on the same subject, that the Catholic groups that are affected by dissent are those groups whose roles were put into question by the social transformations. These groups, notably ACLI, AC the labor confederation CISL, could no longer maintain a balance between their type of traditional religiosity and their modified role.⁷⁰

Concerning ACLI and CISL, Cuminetti argues that the crisis was precipitated by the concrete, common experience of rank-and-file workers and their respective organizations

during the labor struggles of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The crisis occurred concurrently with the workers' movement newly found assertiveness.⁷¹

The crisis grows out of the broad social processes of change that break the social fabric of the Catholic world. In particular, there was a change in the class interests of Catholics, since their class position had shifted. Multi-class unity was possible only until it expressed a world that was not an advanced industrial work world. On the other hand, within the Catholic world at large the crisis was precipitated by the cultural changes wrought by the Council. The most important changes are the new emphasis on the Church as "people of God" and the granting of the autonomy of historical analysis and of political action. The end of this unitary subculture has resulted in a fragmentation into different subcultures, according to the different social bases, types of religiosity, political ideology and membership in different groups.⁷²

Notes to Chapter IV

1. Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, p. 81, quoting Lucio Lombardo-Radice.
2. Partito Comunista Italiano, X Congresso Nazionale. Atti e Risoluzioni (Rome: Riuniti, 1962), p. 668.
3. Togliatti, "Il destino dell'uomo," (1963) Opere Scelte, pp. 1134-1135.
4. Ibid., p. 1131.
5. Disagreements with the Soviet Union Communist Party became public on the occasion of the XII Soviet PC Congress of 1961, over the handling by the Soviet Union of the Chinese question.
6. Togliatti, "Memoriale di Yalta," (1964) Opere Scelte, pp. 1176-1177.
7. See the following articles by Lucio Lombardo-Radice which appeared in Rinascita: "La pluralità dei valori e 'l'incontro' della Chiesa col mondo contemporaneo," 4 April 1964, pp. 23-25; "Di che avete paura? Libertá religiosa e via italiana al socialismo," 4 July 1964, pp. 20-22; and "Relazione a Salisburgo: il pluralismo nella concezione marxista," 8 May 1965, pp. 23-24.
8. Lombardo-Radice, "Di che avete paura? Libertá religiosa e via italiana al socialismo," p. 21.
9. Lombardo-Radice, "La pluralità dei valori e 'l'incontro' della Chiesa col mondo contemporaneo," p. 24.
10. "Di che avete paura? Libertá religiosa e via italiana al socialismo," p. 21.
11. Ibid., p. 22.
12. Ibid.
13. Donald L.M. Blackmer, Unity in Diversity: Italian Communism and the Communist World (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1968), p. 218.
14. Ibid., pp. 218-220.
15. Ibid., pp. 404-405.

16. The progressive laicization of the PCI will be covered in Chapter VI. In 1980 the term "Marxism-Leninism" was removed from the Party Statute. Shortly thereafter Berlinguer stated that the "propelling force of the Russian revolution had expended itself."

17. Kogan, A Political History of Post-War Italy (From the Old to the New Center-Left), p. 45.

18. Ibid., pp. 40-41; see also Allum, "The Italian Communist Party since 1945," pp. 24-25.

19. Togliatti, "Memoriale di Yalta," (1964), Opere Scelte, pp. 1174-1175.

20. Denis Mack Smith, Italy, A Modern History (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969), pp. 148-149.

21. Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, p. 69.

22. "Discorso di Papa Giovanni XXIII per l'apertura del Concilio," Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II, Costituzione, decreti, dichiarazioni, 3rd ed. (Milan: Ancora, 1966), p. 780.

23. Bedeschi, Cattolici e comunisti: dal socialismo cristiano ai cristiani marxisti, p. 210, quoting John XXIII's Pacem in Terris.

24. Mario Gozzini, "Dialogo: i marxisti e la religione," Testimonianze 7 (June 1964):394.

25. Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, pp. 67-68, quoting John XXIII.

26. Bedeschi, Cattolici e comunisti: dal socialismo cristiano ai cristiani marxisti, p. 217.

27. Ibid., p. 218.

28. "Gaudium et Spes," Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II, Costituzione, decreti, dichiarazioni, par. 2 p. 612.

29. Ibid., par. 28, p. 649.

30. G. Alberigo, "I Cristiani nella storia," La Chiesa italiana nell'oggi della fede, G. Alberigo and S. Ruggeri, eds. (Turin: Marietti, 1979), pp. 15-16.

31. Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, pp. 69-70.

32. Franco Rodano, Sulla politica dei comunisti (Turin: Boringhieri, 1975), p. 29.

33. See Filippo Gentiloni, "L'ultimo grande scolastico," il manifesto, 24 July 1983. See also Peppino Orlando, "Questione cattolica e questione democristiana secondo Rodano," Testimonianze 18 (November-December 1975):623-631.

34. Pasquale Colella, "Su Rodano e la questione cattolica," Il Tetto, no. 118-119 (July-October 1983), p. 438.

35. Ernesto Balducci, Editorial, Testimonianze 26 (January 1983):26-27.

36. Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, p. 67, quoting John XXIII.

37. "Discorso di Papa Giovanni XXIII per l'apertura del Concilio," Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II, Costituzione, decreti, dichiarazioni, p. 780.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 784.

39. See Gianni Riccamboni, "Partito comunista e mondo cattolico," Religione e politica. Il caso italiano, p. 185.

40. See the Lucio Lombardo-Radice-Danilo Zolo debate "Dibattito: Cristiani e Marxisti--confronto fra due umanesimi," Testimonianze 7 (November-December 1964):750-766.

41. Ernesto Balducci, "Premesse per ogni dialogo," Testimonianze 8 (May-June 1965):247. A year later the Vatican revoked ecclesiastical approval to the journal on the grounds of its "high ideological opinability, which cannot be officially approved," and of its "questionable judgments concerning history." See Balducci, Editorial, Testimonianze 9 (June 1966). Shortly thereafter Balducci resigned as editor of the journal.

42. Pope Paul VI, "Ecclesiam Suam," Encicliche e discorsi, 20 vols. (Rome: Paoline, 1964-1971), 3:272.

43. *Ibid.*, 3:299.

44. *Ibid.*, 3:304.

45. *Ibid.*, 3:305-306.

46. *Ibid.*, 3:307-308, 311.

47. *Ibid.*, 3:316.

48. Ibid., 3:317, 319.

49. Carlo Prandi, "Cristiani per il socialismo: documenti a confronto," Testimonianze 15 (October 1972):628-642, quoting Paul VI's Octogesima Adveniens.

50. See Giuseppe De Rosa, "Cattolici e Comunisti 'provano' il dialogo," Civiltà Cattolica 116 (5 June 1965):422-434.

51. Bedeschi, Cattolici e comunisti: dal socialismo cristiano ai cristiani marxisti, p. 213.

52. Ibid., p. 215, quoting Paul VI.

53. Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, p. 75. see also Ristuccia, ed., Intellettuale cattolici tra riformismo e dissenso negli anni '50-'60, pp. 38-42.

54. Italo De Sandre, "Per una interpretazione sociologica del dissenso cattolico in Italia," Cultura e Politica, no. 13 (1969), pp.109-110.

55. Arturo Parisi, "La matrice socio-religiosa del dissenso cattolico in Italia," Il Mulino 20 (July-August 1971): 646-647.

56. George H. Hildebrand, Growth and Structure in the Economy of Modern Italy (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), pp. 381-385.

57. Joanne Barkan, Visions of Emancipation: The Italian Workers' Movement since 1945 (New York: Praeger, 1984), p. 9.

58. For 1979 figures, see *ibid.*

59. For 1979 figures, see *ibid.*

60. On the basis of income distribution, Labini's class composition is as follows: (1) bourgeoisie: large land and real estate owners (rentiers); entrepreneurs and corporation executives; self-employed professionals; high échelon bureaucrats and administrators; (2) petite bourgeoisie: public and private clerks and employees, both white and pink collar; shopkeepers and merchants; craftspeople (including small professionals); small farmers and peasants; and categories such as military and clergy; and (3) working class: includes industrial, farm, construction workers and lumpenproletariat. Petite bourgeoisie is called in Italian ceti medi (middle class) and also piccola borghesia (lower middle class). Labini uses these terms interchangeably.

61. Gerardo Chiaromonte, "La crisi italiana," Critica Marxista 11 (May-August 1973):6-20.

62. Giacomantonio, "Le ACLI al Congresso di Rimini: prospettive sul loro ruolo politico," Il Tetto (December 1973): 554-563.

63. Sabino S. Acquaviva, Gustavo Guizzardi and Giancarlo Milanese, "Nouvelles formes de religiosité et développement socio-économique en Italie," Changement Social et Religion, Actes de la XIII Conférence Internationale de Sociologie Religieuse (Lloret de Mar, France, 1975), pp. 159-160.

64. Ibid., p. 160. Reduced Church influence on standards of moral behaviour is especially clear in sexual mores. Italians voted by a large majority in favor of a divorce referendum in 1974, and of a very liberal abortion law referendum in 1981.

65. Ibid., p. 162.

66. Gustavo Guizzardi, "Mutamenti nei significati della religione," Mutamento sociale e contraddizioni culturali (Brescia: La Scuola, 1976), pp. 143, 146, 149.

67. Apart from Acquaviva, Guizzardi and Milanese, and Guizzardi, see Parisi, "La matrice socio-religiosa del dissenso cattolico in Italia," and Paolo Farneti, Il sistema politico italiano (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1973), the introduction. See also Sidoti, "Questitalia e la polemica su temi dell'organizzazione politica dei cattolici," p. 200.

68. Parisi, "La matrice socio-religiosa del dissenso cattolico in Italia," p. 645.

69. Guizzardi, "Mutamenti nei significati della religione," pp. 164-165 and note no. 71.

70. Parisi, "La matrice socio-religiosa del dissenso cattolico in Italia," pp. 646-648.

71. Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, p. 73.

72. Paolo De Sandre and Arturo Parisi, "La collocazione politica degli appartenenti alle 'Associazioni Cattoliche'," Cultura e Politica, no. 12 (1969), pp. 77-78, 81-82.

CHAPTER V

THE 1960s CONTINUED: TYPES OF DIALOGUE

Religious Dissent and the Dialogue

To talk about the Catholic-Communist dialogue means to talk about dissenting Catholics who act upon the indications contained in the message of Vatican Council II and Pope John XXIII. We must therefore, in order to understand the dialogue, examine the nature of this dissent. Concurrently, dissent takes place also within the Italian Communist Party. We are not going to discuss PCI dissent here, except to say that dissenting Communists and dissenting Catholics, along with some dissenting Socialists (unhappy with the growing reformism of the PSI as a result of the compromises that party had been making in order to enter the center-left government in 1963) find that they have much in common. Many of the Catholics and most of the dissenting Communists and Socialists have united forces to form new left groups and parties. Catholic and Communist dissidents reject both institutions where dissent is not tolerated. Both the PCI and the Church are organizationally monolithic and clothe their actions with ideological justifications claiming to have universal validity.

The Vietnam war was the first international event that united these dissidents in common denunciations of the war, although their motivations in opposition to the war differed.

This new left, including the extra-parliamentarian groups and the terrorist nuclei, are constituted by two main strands: former PCI members and PCI sympathizers, and Catholics who rejected the traditional way of living their faith for new visions of social justice.

In evaluating the ideology of this new left, some analysts like Ristuccia claim that among these Catholics who made a "class choice" there are no new intellectual elaborations, no original stimuli for reflection. The old themes of class and social conflict that are implicit in many historical movements of popular Christianity are now interpreted through a popularized, consumeristic Marxism. The abandonment of a religious dimension (where that occurs) is not necessarily the result of a critical coming to maturity, but of a sudden revelation of a void, of an exhaustion of any credible religious dimension.¹

Secondly, we are not directly concerned with Catholic dissent as far as Church structure and theological issues are concerned, but only insofar as these bear on the dialogue. For example, when the dissenting Catholics' call for an institutional reform of the Church is intended not as reform of "this" church, but as the end of the Church as an institution, it appears plausible that these dissenting Catholics will choose to join the new left, rather than the ranks of the other major Italian institution, the PCI.² Nor are we strictly concerned with a mystical, messianic, even

millenarian aspect of the dissent, since this is a purely religious dimension. We are concerned however with these aspects insofar as they bear an indirect political character. One could extrapolate for example that the abandonment of a religious dimension, when it is not followed by a critical political analysis, certainly leaves a void, as Ristuccia noted. And when a facile Marxian analysis is adopted this, coupled with messianic, millenarian feelings (which are common to the Marxian and the Christian passions) can bring some individuals to radical actions such as those of armed struggle. The manifestoes of the Red Brigades reflect both a facile Marxism and a millenarian exhaltation.

Several observers and protagonists of the new left scene have noted the strong Catholic roots in the new left and in terrorist groups. According to European Parliamentarian Luciana Castellina, who was originally of the Manifesto group that was expelled from the PCI in 1969, and is a first-line protagonist of the new left, one extra-parliamentarian group, Lotta Continua (Continuous Struggle) "largely originated in the populist radicalization of people who were coming from Catholic organizations."³ Castellina goes on to note that "Even in the PDUP [a new left party] there were a lot of Catholics. One of the in-jokes was that PDUP was the second Catholic party in Italy." According to Castellina, the most militant Catholics were in the new left and even in the Red Brigades. It is known that the first BR group came from the

Catholic stronghold of Trento, the Catholic Higher School of Sociological Studies. Not only do several prominent BR members have an activist past in Azione Cattolica Youth, but some of them sensationally reconverted to Catholicism while in detention. "It was a small, isolated Marxist-Leninist group (the Gruppi di Azione Partigiana, or GAP) with a Catholic background that initiated terrorist activity in the early 1970s." "It is understandable," continues Castellina "that when Catholics started moving to the left, they retained the same kind of fundamentalism and sought to draw the most far-reaching conclusions."⁴ Piero Pratesi, an Independent Left Catholic, in speaking about utopias makes the point that "so many young Catholics, in jumping to the left, choose, rather than the historical forms of the workers' world, to become militants in the various extremist left groups."⁵

In the history of Christianity, one common element of the different reform movements is the attack on the Church as an institution and the will to individually and directly practice the Gospel. Another common aspect of Christian reform movements is "their indirect political character."⁶ It is indirect because it is manifested in the adoption of a political critique to their religious institution on issues such as anti-authoritarianism, democracy within the Church, rejection of the Church's tactical pragmatism and (given the social and political character of the institution, especially in Italy) the political consequences of certain

political actions of the Church.⁷

In the 1970s there were approximately 250 grassroots Catholic communities (called comunità di base or "base communities") as well as over 400 "spontaneous religious groups" in Italy. Since the Council there has also been a tiny but indicative spreading of evangelical groups, notably the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons and the Methodists, mostly set up by missionaries from the United States. Virtually all of these communities and groups are in the left spectrum of political alignment and very often in the new left and extra-parliamentarian groups. The spontaneous groups and base communities movement has now declined somewhat. Unfortunately there are no systematic data on these phenomena. The most important political groups that contain a significant founding and membership presence of dissenting Catholics are the following:

Cristiani per il socialismo (CPS/Christians for Socialism). Founded in 1973, it is an influential extra-parliamentarian group and the most clearly religious-based group. It is closely connected with base communities and spontaneous groups. One of its founders and major spokesmen is Vatican Council II theologian Giulio Girardi, a Salesian philosophy teacher who was suspended a divinis. This group will be discussed in detail in this chapter.

Gruppo Sinistra Indipendente (Independent Left Group). It was formed in 1976. At present this group has approximately

forty members of Parliament elected on the PCI slate, or about ten percent of the PCI Parliament seats. Its members are prominent Catholic intellectuals such as Adriano Ossicini, Piero Pratesi, Raniero La Valle, Mario Gozzini.

Lotta Continua (LC/Continuous Struggle). Formed in 1969, this extra-parliamentarian group and its newspaper lotta continua had an important opinion-making role in the new left. It voted to dissolve itself in 1979.

Potere Operaio (PO/Workers' Power). This extra-parliamentarian group was formed in 1969 and was very close to activist workers' groups and radical unionists. It voted to dissolve itself in 1973.

Avanguardia Operaia (Workers' Vanguard). Formed in 1968, it had substantially the same role as PO. It gradually lost membership and ceased existing in 1979.

Autonomia Operaia Organizzata (AO/Organized Workers' Autonomy). It was formed in 1973 largely by Potere Operaio and Avanguardia Operaia members. An extra-parliamentarian extremist group with an important opinion-making role in the new left, it is sympathetic to the armed struggle and advocates generalized citizens' violence against institutions. Like Potere Operaio and Avanguardia Operaia, one of its founders and inspirers is the political philosopher Antonio Negri, originally from the Catholic organizations FUCI and AC-Youth. Negri is a member of the European Parliament in the Radical Party and has recently escaped to France. Having

served four years of pre-trial detention on charges of inciting and organizing terrorism. He was released when he was elected to Parliament. He has since received a thirty-year sentence.

Manifesto Group. In 1969, it was originally formed by expelled PCI members Luciana Castellina, Rossana Rossanda, Lucio Magri and Luigi Pintor. The group was expelled when it refused to stop publishing a newspaper (il manifesto). In effect they were a party faction and protested the Party's policy of democratic centralism, along with a general critique of the Party along the lines of a "Chinese" radical Marxism.

Partito di Unitá Proletaria per il Comunismo (PDUP/ Party of Proletarian Unity for Communism). It was formed in 1973 and is closely associated with Manifesto and Lotta Continua. It has been receiving about 1.5 percent of the votes in national elections. At the end of 1984 it voted to be absorbed into the PCI.

Democrazia Proletaria (DP/Proletarian Democracy). A political party also formed in 1973, it is closely aligned with Lotta Continua, Manifesto and PDUP. It receives about 1.5 of the vote in national elections.

I Verdi (Green Party). Founded in late 1984, at the May 1985 administrative elections it received 2.1 percent of the votes. It seems capable of growing along the lines of the West Germany Green Party, and it follows the latter's ecological and anti-nuclear philosophy.

Armed Struggle Nuclei. The most important of these

underground terrorist groups are the Brigate Rosse (BR/Red Brigades), Prima Linea (PL/First Line), Gruppi Armati Partigiani (GAP/Armed Partisan Groups), and Nuclei Armati Proletari (NAP/Armed Proletarian Nuclei). They appeared in the early 1970s. After the murder of DC leader Aldo Moro and the violent state backlash, large numbers have been arrested. At present, several hundred are in detention. In 1977, PCI Senator Ugo Pecchioli estimated that these groups did not exceed 800 active members, plus maybe 10,000 active "auxiliaries" largely found in Autonomia Operaia which had "gained a footing among industrial workers inside production plants in large cities." The terrorists are protected by a "zone of political solidarity," including--says Pecchioli--Lotta Continua and AO members. These allegations, however are strongly contested by both AO and LC.⁸

Other specifically Catholic political action groups were born in the late 1960s, founded mostly by ACLI and CISL left cadres associated with the unions. These groups were short lived. They are: Azione Culturale Politica (ACPOL/Political Cultural Action); Movimento per i Lavoratori (MPL/Movement for Workers); Movimento di Operai Cristiani (MOC/Christian Workers Movement); Partito Socialista Italiano di Unitá Proletaria (PSIUP/Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity). At one time or another, CPS, PDUP, the Independent Left Group, MPL, MOC, ACPOL and PSIUP have been viewed as embryonic new Catholic parties around which left-

leaning and socially-conscious Catholics could organize, thus breaking the political unity of Catholics centered around the DC.

The following are some of the main religious themes and motivations that operate in the choice of a left political ideology on the part of dissenting Catholics.

First of all, most dissenting Catholics perceive the Church in mystical rather than empirical terms, as "the people of God." By people of God they mean the faithful equally and communally united in worship, as opposed to the faithful being led in their worship by a hierarchy-appointed priest. Thus they are opposed to the institutional aspect of the Church; its hierarchy and its diplomatic/legal/political apparatus.⁹ They aspire to return to the model of primitive Christian communities, before Christianity became the state religion of the Roman empire. In those first centuries the Church was powerless, undogmatic, underground, poor, oppressed, decentralized and based among the faithful. In this analysis, the Church was "pure" and, as such, it could speak "prophetically." Needless to say, dissenting Catholics in general feel they are God's people and their voices are the prophetic ones. These believers form "base" or "grass-roots" communities often occupying and "liberating" the church edifice, choose their own priest, often worker-priests who refuse the state salary. Lay people have equal access to the pulpit in leading the communal prayers. Those believers

who choose to remain based in a traditional parish with a priest appointed by the hierarchy exhalt the importance of the local church in its contact with the people, as contrasted with the hierarchical centers of power.

Dissenting Catholics use Christian teaching as political doctrine: the injunctions to love and help the poor and the oppressed are easily translatable into a political choice of radical, even violent, action for social justice. Along with this is a rediscovery of the Scriptures through a personal, radical interpretation with a rejection of traditional Catholic theology, whether of the Thomist or Augustinian variety. Their theology is existentially and processually "in the making" for it arises out of reflection upon their own practice. The literal application of the Gospel's message brings them to an appreciation of poverty, in their own lives and politically in making a "preferential option for the poor" thus being against capitalism and consumerism. In a way, this dissent radicalizes politically the historical Christian tradition of anti-capitalism and anti-consumerism. This tradition had its origins in Italy in the first Christian groups that rejected the ideal and the reality of the Church as a temporal institution tending to amass land, property, wealth and power. In the Middle Ages, those groups formed around Saint Benedict, Saint Francis, Fra Dolcino and Joachim da Fiore.¹⁰ Poetically, it has been immortalized in Dante's Divine Comedy.

The class struggle is viewed and lived simultaneously as an "experience of faith": through the class struggle is the struggle to make the Church simple, pure and prophetic again. The rejection of a hierarchical system of authority, where only the Pope and the top layers can interpret the word of God, translates politically into a preference for communal, egalitarian structures like the early Christian communities with charismatic leaders chosen by consensus. Base communities and spontaneous religious groups have this structure, as do new left groups and parties. Politically, they favor a Communist society based on direct democracy.

The Journal "Testimonianze"
and PCI Intellectuals

This debate is important because it set the tone and the conditions for the dialogue. According to the Catholic Mario Gozzini, Christianity is not compatible with Marxism, and it would be an absurdity to try to equate the two ideologies. This was substantially the position of Luigi Longo, then PCI General Secretary, and of Civiltá Cattolica's Jesuit Giuseppe de Rosa. De Rosa argued that the dialogue had to be understood as a confrontation of different positions, not as a search for an integration of values, or as a meeting of ideas that are the springboard for a joint action. For De Rosa therefore, the end of the dialogue is to prove that the dialogue is impossible. This position sees both Catholicism and Marxism as "two total, global visions of the world,

opposite and contradictory, one open to future life, the other closed by an earthly messianism."¹¹

In order for a dialogue to be possible, argued Gozzini, there must be a less naïve Marxian elaboration of the religious phenomenon. One must examine whether the nexus between an atheistic ideology and a socialist program is a necessary element of Marxism, or one occasioned by given historical circumstances. Any united action is unthinkable until the PCI revises explicitly its positions on faith. Gozzini hoped in 1964 that the Party would end its ideological totalitarianism: he saw the PCI's doctrinal rigidity as the one major obstacle standing in the way of the Party's pursuit of an "Italian way to Socialism."¹² A year later, Gozzini argued that the discourse must be taken away from the institutions that dominate it and be given to individuals. Furthermore, he argued that Marxist historicism must recognize that the contents of religion can be different in different historical periods. Hence, the thesis of "religion as permanent alienation" is no longer defensible.¹³ In 1976 Gozzini, by now a member of PCI, was one of the founders of the Independent Left and was elected to Parliament on the PCI slate.

Communist philosopher of education Lucio Lombardo-Radice, a self-professed atheist, developed the notion of a new Marxism which is not "scholastic," but "Galileian," a Marxism that can take stock of new facts in religious

consciousness and thought. The new facts to be taken into consideration are the sizable participation on the part of believers to historical movements of social justice.

Mentioning Gaudium et Spes, Lombardo-Radice noted that this movement affecting millions of Catholics, which exploded with John XXIII, could not be reduced to a simplistic or simply incorrect view that religion, as such, kills the element of the will in man. There is an acceptance in good faith of the changes being wrought in the Church not as a simple tactic, but as a true aggiornamento.¹⁴

For Lombardo-Radice, Marx's over-all negative evaluation of Christianity is due to Marx's Enlightenment ideals as well as to the historical reality of the Church's conservative, even reactionary, position in the nineteenth century. Christian reality, however, has changed, just as a rationalistic Enlightenment has disappeared. Thus Marxism, no longer tied to scholastic-type rigidities, can "renounce the classical Marxist theses on religion." On this level, therefore, "Christians can accept the challenge posed by Marxism, and the dialogue starts to make sense." Lenin's statements on religion, for example, are recognized by Lombardo-Radice as contingent historical affirmations, not as theoretical principles. Lenin's analysis of the relationship between class and ideology is called "simplistic." "Catholic workers," said Lombardo-Radice "are revolutionary not although, but because they are Catholic."

In discussing the nature of the Socialist state, Lombardo-Radice asserted that it ought to be agnostic, both as concerns religion and political ideology. He noted that there is an equivocation in the terms "Communist" and "Catholic." The former is a purely political term, while the latter's connotation is not exclusively political. "The double error one often makes is to consider 'Catholic' as a political term only, and to believe that 'Communism' is a philosophical definition. . . . Therefore the oft-made error is to make of the Church a party, and of the party a Church."

In developing his notion of a "Galileian" Marxism, Lombardo-Radice distinguished between Communism as a political and revolutionary movement, and Communism as a developing science. In its status as science, Marxism neither introduces nor denies "the hypothesis of God." Personally, however, Lombardo-Radice believed that faith is destined to dissolve itself into, simply, human thought. At the 1965 Salzburg Christian-Marxist Congress he maintained substantially the same positions.

In further developing a Galileian Marxism, he pointed out that

. . . if one applies Marxism itself to Marxism one concludes that it, too, is unilateral, therefore it needs, in order to develop, other unilateral truths that may be complementary to it. . . . Historicism, therefore, brings a relativistic perspective even with reference to itself.

Because of the dialogue, Marxism in effect changed from being a Weltanschauung to being an ideology. Here ideology is

understood as a provisional interpretation of reality. Hence, if Marxism is now an ideology, it can no longer define religion as alienation. Nor can Marxism now define itself as necessarily entailing atheism. At the most, Marxism can be atheistic pragmatically since, historically, religion has been an obstacle to progress. But even this pragmatism falls when Togliatti stated in the Bergamo speech that "faith can also contribute to historical progress." (Italics mine). On the whole, Lombardo-Radice maintained that Christianity and Marxism are different but not antagonistic. That these values are both human and humanistic and that a pluralism of values and ideologies is a necessary element in modern society.¹⁵

Angelo Marchese, a Catholic of the journal Il Gallo, saw the cultural matrices of the dialogue in the personalism of Mounier and in Gramscian humanism. In the dialogue, a distinction is made between Christianity which, as a meta-historical essence, is founded upon Revelation and does not change in the course of history, and the incarnation of the Gospel's message in history along with men's comprehension of the message. This second Christianity has a processual nature that takes place within the laws of history. This second Christianity is therefore on the same plane as Marxism. The latter, however, being born within history, may extinguish itself. One thing is sure: a dialogue is not possible on positions of integrism or monism in either field.¹⁶

Arnaldo Nesti, a Catholic, in reviewing the Testimo-

nianze debate concluded, like Gozzini, De Rosa and Longo, that a dialogue between two totally opposed Weltanschauungen is impossible. The only absolute value that issued forth from this dialogue, he sustained, was that a Christian could be a witness to the validity of Christianity as a liberating belief. In the spirit of Vatican Council II, a Christian could live one's faith as love, and could live this faith-love in two simultaneous spheres: in a sacralized structure (the Church), and through one's neighbor, in actions "tending to create an earthly city where all men can fulfill themselves as ends."¹⁷

In reviewing this officially sponsored dialogue, we can extrapolate the following points:

On the Marxist side, there are two conditions without which the dialogue cannot take place:

1. The acceptance would have to be made of the legitimacy of existence of religious phenomena, as least as phenomenological and historical reality
2. There would have to be an acceptance of ideological pluralism. Marxism becomes just one ideology among many.

On the Catholic side, the dialogue would be possible only on the following conditions:

1. The acceptance would have to be made of ideological pluralism. Christianity becomes just one ideology among many

2. A different approach to the world would have to be made, with a rediscovery of history in its process of becoming, the locus where one ought to look for the "signs of the times."

As corollaries to the above, the following would have to be recognized by both sides: a recognition of the common foundations of civilization and that, in principle, the other ideology may be the carrier of values that are not incompatible with the values stressed by one's own ideology. A recognition, in principle, that the other ideology may tend towards social goals that are not incompatible with those elaborated by one's own ideology, and an a priori openness to the possibility of common cooperation to reach those social goals. Along with a non-dogmatic approach to both ideologies, each side would have to reject any rigidity in theory, i.e. any dogma.

Other methodological principles that may be culled from the 1964-1965 debate are that an ideological neutralism is not desirable, since it would devalue the positive elements of both ideologies. Also, the dialogue should be neither purely political nor purely metaphysical or institutional. It should concentrate on the value aspect of both ideologies. From a broad review of this debate and of critiques of same, we can list the following issues as issues that would have to be included in a serious dialogue:

- °The phenomenon of religious experience
- °The person as an absolute value in Christianity
- °Historical development as an absolute value in Marxism

- °Religion as alienation: Marxian-Feuerbachian views
- °Marxism's denial of the concept of natural right
- °Christianity's assertion of the primacy of the person
- °Whether history is immanent or transcendent
- °Value-compatibility of both humanisms
- °The Marxist concept of historical transcendence in religion, the state and the law.

On the Catholic side, in the spirit of Maritain and Mounier, one would have to recognize the following:

- *The struggle against capitalism is a just struggle
- *Marx gave a precious contribution to the study of social reality
- *Militant atheism is often a reflection of the practical atheism of many so-called Christians
- *One should do away with the prejudice that Marxism is reducible to "vulgar" materialism
- *One should recognize that Communism as lived, is a revolutionary, ascetic, mystical practice.

This dialogue, no matter how it was undertaken, had a really crucial function: for both sides came to realize and to agree that there exist two humanisms in the respective ideologies, and that parallel, sometimes convergent values, were individuated in these two humanisms. Intellectual honesty would require that both sides agree that none of them can monopolize the future of man, and that it behooves one to see the future as a common project. Finally, that to a post-Council Christianity should correspond a neo-Marxism.

ACLI's Class Choice

The Period of Collateralism

As explained in Chapter III, ACLI (the Italian Christian Workers' Associations) was founded in 1944 by the Vatican and by Azione Cattolica as a labor organization with the express purpose of inserting a specifically Catholic political presence in the working class, tending to keep Catholics united behind the Christian Democratic Party. According to its founding charter, ACLI was to be

. . . the expression of the Christian current in the field of labor . . . and it was to attend to the religious, cultural and moral education of workers.¹⁸

The nature of the organization, and the course it has taken in its forty years of existence, are exemplary of a process that has marked the evolution of a significant part of the masses that had formerly been circumscribed into the Catholic ideological and political universe. The history of ACLI is marked by its passage from full integration in the Catholic world as a DC-collateral organization, subordinated to the DC and to the Vatican, to the assertion of independence from the DC and the Vatican, and the attempt to formulate new political hypotheses.¹⁹ ACLI's history, illustrated briefly in the following pages, supports the sociological analysis by Parisi presented in Chapter IV, according to whom the political dissent expressed by groups and organizations of the Catholic world is a function of their closeness to and identification with the interests of the working class.

In trying to assess ACLI's evolution its current President, Domenico Rosati, a moderate, hypothesizes that "from inception, ACLI has been a political organization, that is, it has concretely made politics in Italian society." If this hypothesis is correct, then certain interesting conclusions can be extrapolated concerning the controversy between ACLI, the Italian Bishops' Conference and Pope Paul VI. The controversy arose in 1969 when ACLI adopted a Socialist class analysis and released its members to vote according to conscience. Not only did the Vatican sharply criticize ACLI for these decisions, but it terminated its subsidy and removed its Ecclesiastical Assistant. The stripping of ACLI's official character as a Catholic organization was justified by the Pope and the bishops on the ground that ACLI "had become politicized, and whether this was a legitimate activity of the organization." More precisely, says Rosati, the Vatican was worried about "the quantity and quality of ACLI's new political involvement," for ACLI's activity had always been political.²⁰

ACLI was born as the "mediated formula of the consensus, on the part of Church authorities, to labor unity." It was founded upon two basic principles: the acceptance of Catholic social doctrine and the political unity of Catholics. ACLI, says Rosati, "had to guarantee . . . the unity of Catholic workers in the labor unions, and their coherent political projection." In fact, one of the conditions placed by the

Vatican in constituting ACLI was that it "follow the doctrine of Christianity as taught by the Church . . . in whose application can be detected the foundation and the conditions for a renewed social order." At its first National Congress in 1946, ACLI reaffirmed that "Christian social doctrine, as confirmed in the recent papal messages, proposes an adequate solution to all of the workers' problems." The mediation between the apostolic activity (ACLI's official function) and the political activity (ACLI's operative function) was effected through the spreading of Catholic social doctrine.²¹

From 1944 until termination in 1971, ACLI received much of its funding from the Vatican for the official purpose of "organizing and directing Catholic workers in the labor unions." In its first years, it was also funded by the DC and, indirectly, by the United States. As with other Catholic collateral organizations, the Vatican provided ACLI with an "Ecclesiastical Assistant" appointed directly by the Pope. The Ecclesiastical Assistant was, argues Rosati,

. . . the hierarchical link through which the Bishops' Conference and the Holy See directed ACLI's activity. . . . Its activity was seen as the direct expression of a task of evangelization. . . therefore, through the Assistant, the hierarchy reserved for itself, from inception, a role of management of ACLI.²²

In the 1940's one of the major preoccupations of the Vatican was labor unity, perhaps because the labor union federation was overwhelmingly dominated by the left. The Pact of Labor Unity (known as the Pact of Rome, June 1944) between Catholics, Communists and Socialists had been drawn

by former labor union cadres whose organizations had been persecuted and dissolved during the fascist regime. The Pact of Rome gave birth to the Italian General Labor Confederation (CGIL). At the first 1944 CGIL National Congress, PCI delegates received 40 percent of the votes; PSI delegates another 40 percent; and Catholics less than 20 percent. In 1947, at the second CGIL National Congress, PCI delegates reaped 57 percent of the votes, PSI delegates 23 percent, and DC delegates a mere 14 percent. Whereupon, the Vatican acted through ACLI to break up labor unity.²³

In 1948, ACLI took most of the Catholic workers into the newly formed Italian Confederation of Labor Unions (CISL). According to Rosati, this first major political maneuver that divided the workers' movement was a first major evidence of the gap between the officially asserted "apostolic" function of the organization, and its concrete political practice, maneuvered by the Vatican. CISL rapidly grew to be the second largest labor union federation. In 1954, CGIL (tied to the PCI) had 4.3 million members; CISL (tied to the DC) had 2.8 million workers; and UIL (tied to the PSI, PSDI and PRI) had about one million members.

Ironically, the breakup of labor unity was not the result of problems or decisions internal to the labor movement, Italian politics or Church problems. According to Domenico Rosati, it was willed by the United States Labor Organization CIO. ACLI, says Rosati and, by implication, the

Vatican, "was the visible and pliant tool of an anti-Communist alignment where the roles were assigned by other, much more authoritative, interlocutors."²⁴

ACLI's collaboration and subservience to the Vatican was very strong in the 1940s and 1950s. In the 1950s it participated in anti-Communist electoral activities with the ultra-conservative Civic Committees. But, according to Michele Giacomantonio of the ACLI left, the "specific interests of the workers" is a real characteristic of ACLI. This commitment to the workers' cause, as well as the social and class composition of its members and cadres, initiated a process of widening contrasts with the Vatican and the Christian Democratic Party:

The social conditions in which the country lives cannot fail to influence an organization which is based upon workers and peasants, just as the development of production forces typical of capitalism cannot fail to influence ACLI. With the growth of society and of capitalism there also grows a workers' autonomy although it still moves, with respect to ACLI, in an arc that is internal to the system, and in a political horizon where the DC is still the sole point of reference.²⁵

In the 1950s, much of the left current in the Christian Democratic Party was propelled by ACLI people. In order to stop this influence on the DC, the Vatican maneuvered to have ACLI declare the incompatibility of holding simultaneously executive positions in ACLI and in the DC. Until 1958, ACLI publicly released the names of the DC parliamentary candidates that it supported, usually from the DC's left wing. In the early 1960s ACLI supported the opening to the left. Until 1969, the year of the class choice, ACLI's President

had always been a DC man, except for the 1960-1961 period.²⁶

The Class Choice

At the 1969 XI National ACLI Congress, then President Livio Labor officially sanctioned "the end of the practice of collateralism," allowing its members for the first time "the freedom to vote according to conscience."²⁷ This is the point of arrival of a long process initiated in the late 1950s. Simultaneously with the official end of ACLI's collateralism, several small political groups were born, mostly formed by ACLI and CISL left. The most important groups were the Christian Workers Movement (MOC), Political Cultural Action (ACPOL), and the Movement for Workers (MPL). None of these groups seemed able to become a "second" Catholic party. Eventually, these groups fused with the traditional left or the new left.

In 1970, in the wake of intense labor unrest, neo-fascist attacks, and the Socialist option made by the CFDT (the French labor federation that, like CISL, is connected to the Catholic world), ACLI's President Emilio Gabaglio put forth its "socialist hypothesis": public ownership of key industries, economic planning, and self-management were adopted in ACLI's political program. In answer to the Italian Bishops' Conference that refused to recognize this clearly Socialist position as being "compatible with a Christian vision of life and of history," ACLI's reply was curt:

For ACLI to be Christians and to be workers means today to assume in its entirety the workers's condition and the initiatives that work towards their redemption and, therefore, to make a class choice, incarnating into this choice its own Christian witness, both as individuals and as a group.²⁸

After intense meetings and pressures upon ACLI by the bishops, the Curia, and the Pope, in 1971 ACLI was stripped of the Ecclesiastical Assistant and was no longer officially recognized as a "Catholic association" by the Vatican.

Shortly thereafter, Pope Paul VI did

. . . deplore . . . the direction taken by ACLI, which has changed the statutory commitment of the movement and has qualified it politically, choosing, besides, a Socialist position, with its questionable and dangerous doctrinal implications. Thus the movement . . . regretfully, of its own will, has left the group of associations to which the hierarchy gives its consent.²⁹

Certainly, its class choice meant a rejection of the validity and adequacy of traditional Catholic social doctrine. After asserting that, contrary to Rerum Novarum and Quadragesimo Anno, one can now affirm that "an authentic Socialist choice is no longer incompatible with a Christian consciousness," Gabaglio specified that what is at stake is not the construction of a "'Christian' socialism . . . the choice cannot be made by Christianity as such, but it can be the coherent choice of individual Christians."³⁰

In justifying ACLI's class choice, Gabaglio wrote that it was made inevitable by the very rapid socio-political transformations, where the sociological bases of old Catholicism (rural, low middle class, traditionally based on parish associationism and early forms of industrial

production) had been corroded by the development of the capitalist system. "Therefore, all sectors of social life have been transversed by class conflicts, so that a class analysis becomes the absolute principle of intelligibility of the real." Gabaglio appropriated Marx's theory that "in a capitalistic society religious sentiments are the preferred locus of alienation." Ideology has also permeated religious praxis, so that "the Gospel has become functional to the ideology of the dominant classes." Apart from whatever political or ethical motivations a believing Catholic may have that leads him to a class choice, the first motivation for that choice is religious: it demystifies faith.³¹

As a result of the intense pressure placed on ACLI by the Vatican and the DC and in order to stem dissent from the center-right of the association and consequent threatened mass resignations, a year later, in 1972, ACLI pledged a "rethinking of the class choice and the Socialist hypothesis." In more moderate tones, ACLI admitted that:

In the urgency of wanting to answer national and international problems . . . we may have made errors of evaluation and of appreciation of the circumstances. . . . We therefore commit ourselves to a "critical reconsideration of the socialist hypothesis" . . . that would exclude any belated and unjustified adherence to Marxist ideology . . . and we would take into consideration the precious indications contained in Paul VI's Octogesima Adveniens.³²

ACLI's right wing further specified that the problem was:

. . . if our actions as a Christian social group must or must not be in harmony with the indications of the Church's magisterium, including the social, ordinary, historical and even contingent Church magisterium.³³

However, the "pluralistic experience of the workers' movement," and therefore of ACLI as a workers' organization, can no longer be denied, nor can one deny "the fact that there is a request for Socialism among a part of the workers."³⁴ At this National Congress ACLI's "rethinking of the Socialist hypothesis and class choice" was accepted with 56 percent of the votes; the ACLI left received 18 percent and the ACLI right wing 26 percent of the votes. To recompose the unity of the organization a moderate, Domenico Rosati, was elected President.

Whereas the first article of the founding charter had stated that the organization was founded upon the "affirmation of Christian principles in life, orientation, and legislation," the same article, now modified reflects a moderate shift towards a Vatican Council II interpretation

ACLI founds upon the Gospel's Message and upon the teachings of the Church its actions on behalf of promoting the welfare of the working class and on behalf of organizing those Christian workers who intend to contribute to build a new society where, as per justice, the full development of each human being is assured.³⁵

In looking in retrospect to this turbulent period, in a 1980 ACLI debate on the much discussed theme of "governabilità" (governability), some articulations of the dialogue emerged as to what concerns the problem of democratic governance, the government's connection to civil society, and the crises of value and of citizen participation evidenced by strikes, terrorism, increased organized crime activities. To resolve these crises, ACLI proposed to reflect on Moro's

analysis of the problem of governance. According to Moro, the fact that one strong political element (the Communist Party) is systematically excluded from governing is what creates a difficulty in forming and maintaining a stable government that would have the trust, support and consent of the population. ACLI proposed that a "constructive dialogue" be reopened among all interested parties on middle-range perspectives of the Italian political system. Clearly, by dialogue ACLI meant effective proposals for some form of historic compromise. 36

Present Status of ACLI

The evolution of this organization in terms both of self-definition and of political platform was profoundly affected by the dialogue. From the theses submitted for discussion and adoption at the 1985 ACLI National Congress that was concluded in January, the following indications emerge:

ACLI sees itself as the "animator of a movement in civil society that can affect the quality of politics in the sense of achieving reforms." (Thesis 1.1). ACLI's task is to build a "new society where the development of man is ensured, thus accomplishing the vocation proper to the laity of 'looking for the kingdom of God by attending to temporal matters and ordering them according to God.'" (Thesis 1.5). In Thesis 2.1 ACLI asserts that its activity is still essentially apostolic:

. . . We want to contribute to the growth of the laity, which is essential to the Church. . . . The laity are God's people, committed to looking for God in everything, and

to looking for everything in God. . . . Especially, the social dimension of human existence and work are a most important moment of social life of interest to the laity.³⁷

Thesis 3.1 places the "guarantee of peace as a condition for the development of all peoples . . . and supports the Freeze . . . through the Diocesan Commissions on Justice and Peace and, politically, through the European Parliament as well as through development committees set up by ACLI in the third world." This is a mild pacifist position that aims to work through existing religious and political institutions to achieve the Freeze as proposed by the United States peace movement. Thesis 4.6 looks at the problem of work and argues that "planning becomes necessary especially when resources become scarce," and opts for a restructuring of the welfare state in terms of private-social initiatives open to associationist volunteer work. This supersession of the concept of the welfare state and the solutions proposed are not unlike neo-conservative proposals of retrenchment of the welfare state being practiced in the rest of the Western world.

On the subject of the Italian Communist Party's participation to government, ACLI applies the Pacem in Terris distinction between historical-political movements and the doctrines that originated them. Especially, speaking in favor of some form of the historic compromise, Thesis 5.13 argues:

. . . It cannot be excluded that . . . forces that declare to be unable to "combine together" in fact do become allied . . . in the higher interests of democracy. One should never fail to stress the evolutionary character of historical movements, evidenced by the detachment, in praxis, from the original ideological matrices.

This is especially true when "the legitimation of all the forces in the political field has already taken place" (Thesis 5.15). There is a reference to Aldo Moro's assassination in this context. For ACLI the PCI achieved full legitimation to be a party of government as a result, in the last instance, of Moro's assassination. Concerning ideologies, ACLI recognizes the "impracticality of univocal and total interpretations of the historical process of becoming." (Thesis 6.4). The document concludes with an explicit motion in support of the historic compromise:

. . . Democracy is in danger when the historical process of physiological change and of alternation of government forces on the basis of popular votes is artificially blocked.³⁸

As an over-all appraisal of the ACLI experience, we can say that ACLI has lived a continuous dilemma between its claims of autonomy and its de facto dependence upon the Vatican; between the movement that it wanted to be, and the type of organization that it was forced to be; between the movement of mobilization and struggle that it was building, and the clientele-based, opinion group that the Vatican was trying to keep. In the last instance, the crisis of ACLI, according to Giacomantonio, is that it believed it could bring forward at the same time both projects, although they contradict each other.³⁹ The course of events in ACLI corroborates the previously referred to sociological hypotheses. They also corroborate Lelio Basso's hypothesis of the inherent contradiction of being simultaneously a "church organization"

and a "labor organization," i.e., part of the workers' movement, thus in a dialectically and conflict-ridden relationship with the establishment, of which the Church is the major support pillar.

The Christians for Socialism

The first meeting of the Christians for Socialism (CPS) was held in Santiago, Chile in 1972. Shortly thereafter other CPS groups were formed in Latin America and Western Europe. The first Italian CSP congress took place in 1973 with the participation of 2,000 delegates representing spontaneous religious groups and base communities. Generally speaking, the Western European CPS are pressure groups connected to the left. At the same time they are a cultural movement within the Church that criticizes the politics and theology of the Church. They do this, as Marguerite Gille of the French CPS says, "in the name of a certain reading of the Gospel."⁴⁰ Their religious and political activities are two sides of the same coin: the political activity is fueled by religious fervor and their religiosity is expressed in political practice. Although numerically small, the CPS are important theoretically for they represent the most dramatic and radical example of Catholic dissent. They simultaneously adopt a most radical way of living their newly found, or reappropriated faith and a most radical way of living their newly found Marxism. They are past the "dialogue stage." As

Giulio Girardi says, "the problem is no longer one of dialogue because we are Christian Marxists and Marxist Christians . . . we are Marxists precisely because we are Christians."⁴¹ For them no dialogue is necessary.

The CPS have achieved a fusion of Christian and Marxist beliefs, concepts and principles. Christianity is reinterpreted in the light of their "class choice" and of their sense of a coherent political practice. For them, the "aggiornamento" sanctioned by the Council did not go to the roots of the problem that the Church finds itself in.

The "aggiornamento" remains essentially intra-church, limited to the ecumenical, biblical, liturgical aspects of religion. . . . [For the kind of] renewal which is demanded by a revolutionary commitment, however, we think that the problems of the Church have their roots outside of the Church, in the world, and that only by inserting ourselves in a project of global transformation will the Church be able to transform itself.⁴²

For this reason the ideologies of the CPS begin with a class analysis of the Church and of religious alienation. At the same time, they want to be the cutting edge and the interpreters of a shift towards the left by Catholic masses.⁴³ Any theological elaboration must be in a constant but dialectical relationship with the Gospel, within a historical reading of current social struggles and of previous ones. Above all, it is important for the Western European CPS groups to fight the attempts which are being made to restore to Christianity a "Euro-Christianity" founded upon Christian social doctrine and upon a pretended "moralization of capitalism," through the political vehicles of Western European

Christian Democratic parties.

Similarly to the Western European CPS, the Italian group wants to be "coherent to two main principles: the Marxist analysis of society and the liberating practice of Jesus that the Gospel speaks of." This double approach underlies all their actions, with the continuous possibility of self-criticism because, "like Jesus, Marx teaches us to be against dogmatism"⁴⁴ As Girardi says, a class analysis of society and of Catholicism is for the CPS not only a political choice, but also a theological choice.⁴⁵

The CPS movement is concerned with a cultural revolution that ought to go hand in hand with a transition to Socialism. Along with the, by now, familiar exposition of the crisis in Italian society and in the Italian Church, the CPS have a critical attitude towards the left: they have in their militant experience reappropriated their faith as purists. They are beyond expediency. While refusing to become a second Catholic party, they also reject what they see as the PCI's "pollution" of its revolutionary heritage as evidenced by the Party's attempt at a historic compromise.⁴⁶

At the 1983 third European Congress of Christians for Socialism, the Italian delegation confessed that the movement had not been able in its ten years of existence to build a credible and workable political hypothesis. Therefore, there has been a return into the private sphere or into the traditional way of "doing" politics, i.e. that some joined the PCI. Some,

says the report, even ended up participating in the armed struggle of the Red Brigades. The self-analysis concludes that the movement can neither grow numerically, nor build a new political project for the left. At the same time, the Church's and the DC's efforts at a "recomposition of the Catholic area" represent a new form of integrism (both religious and political) that restrict the spaces for an effective people's and workers' struggle. Most importantly, the prospects for a "left alternative" and consequent transition to Socialism that seemed realizable in the mid-1970s has, for the CPS, miserably ended in the failure of the historic compromise.⁴⁷ Girardi notes that historic compromise and Eurocommunism policies stress the convergence and alliance not primarily of the Catholic masses, but of those political and religious institutions that organize these masses to form a majority. As a matter of fact, the PCI refrains from a class analysis of the Church and the Catholic world.⁴⁸

Most of the adherents to CPS come from two major kinds of background. Many have a political activist experience in Catholic collateral organizations, while others have made a political choice and commitment through a radicalization of their faith. Both components of CPS are active, often in leading roles, in spontaneous religious groups, base communities, and new left groups. Their positions can be summed up as follows:

Politically, they stand by the following principles:

they denounce the mystifying character of Catholic social doctrine and of multi-class politics. They oppose any degree of Church interference in Christians' political choices. They want an end to political unity based on official Catholicism and to the practice of collateralism. They adopt Marxism as a method of analysis, but not as a totalizing ideology. Rather than making a distinction between historical materialism and dialectical materialism as the Catholic Communists did in the 1940s and 1950s, they adopt a radical but non-dogmatic humanist version of Marxism. Finally, they reject any form of political or religious integrism.

Concerning religion, they believe that Church religiosity is intrinsically alienating, and that certain traditional religious beliefs and practices ideologically favor the ruling classes. For them, there is a direct connection between these ideological beliefs and practices and the alienating character of the religious message as managed by the Church hierarchy: the Church defends a conservative position in social life. Being committed to search for alternative, liberating religious experiences, they accept no authority other than their own in the interpretation of the Gospel.

Conclusions

In trying to assess the results of this turbulent period for both the Party and the Church, one clear evaluation

that can be made is that the dialogue, when it did occur, could not be controlled by either the Party or the Church. There was a definite loss of power and influence that the Church had enjoyed politically. The results of the dialogue were positive for the left in general, especially the new left, but not for the PCI specifically. While it gave the Party electoral successes, party membership did not increase, and the critique from new left quarters intensified.

The dialogue was willed by both institutions as a "cautious" opening that would legitimate the inclusion of the Communists into the government. The idea of the dialogue itself was introduced by the top leadership (Togliatti, John XXIII, Vatican Council II) and when it did occur, on the intellectual level (see the journals Rinascita, Testimonianze and Civiltá Cattolica) it was a dead-end street. At this level, it was the work of mediators (journals and individuals) who had some authority in their respective political constituencies. There was a preoccupation on both sides that the dialogue take place on a cultural, rather than directly political, level.

According to Attilio Monasta, a Catholic of the diaspora,

. . . the meeting between Catholic dissent groups and left parties and labor unions was never based on the logic of the political class alignment and the commitment that it would have required. It was never a natural insertion of those who made a class choice into either the PCI or the CGIL. . . . This was due to an original equivocation that vitiated the possibility of a genuine meeting . . . that equivocation was precisely the dialogue.⁴⁹ (Italics mine.)

Monasta refers to the 1964-1968 period. The equivocation of the PCI in this type of analysis--typical of a Catholic new left analysis--was to establish a dialogue with the Church, i.e. with the hierarchy, rather than with progressive Catholic groups. The PCI could not therefore be a natural choice for those believers who were making a class choice precisely as an expression of religious dissent from their own hierarchy.⁵⁰

In short, the PCI saw the Church as the institutional expression of a Catholic "movement" and mistrusted the dissident Catholic movements that came out in the open at the time of the Council. While the PCI achieved some legitimation and credibility as a result of its opening to the Church and its revision of the Marxian analysis of religion, this legitimation and credibility was seen negatively by dissenting Catholics who made a leftward class choice and by the new left. This ideological shift by the PCI meant concurrently, for dissenting Catholics and the new left, a further blurring of the Party's original Marxist-Leninist ideological heritage. The PCI's unfortunate handling of internal dissent, the Manifesto affair, did not sit well with dissenting Catholics.

The other important evaluation of the 1960s dialogue was that it was not the cultural dialogue that precipitated the crisis of so many Catholics. Rather, the dialogue was a cultural and linguistic tool that was seized by believers to implement their process of conscientizaçao (coming to awareness). This process of coming to religious and political awareness

was the result, however, of real social transformations. More poignantly, for Catholics who had been politically involved since the 1960s, it was the result of the concrete experiences of struggle side-by-side with their Communist and Socialist comrades in the labor struggles of those years.

Finally, as Lucio Lombardo-Radice often said, "the beginning of the dialogue was the end of the dialogue." And politically, it was a one-way street: from the DC to the PCI and the new left. Certainly in the 1960s and the early 1970s the PCI was worried by power relations and believed that a Catholic movement could not rebel against the Church without thereby ceasing to be Catholic. The basic attitude of the PCI was that it refused to give value and hope to Catholics in removing the masses from the hegemony of the Church. They seemed to believe that a religious faith detached from any institution is suspect because of its subversive potential. The PCI has revealed its reluctance to transform the contradictions of the Catholic world in a real mass phenomenon, such as to break the DC and reverse the relations of power in favor of a real left political alternative in government.⁵¹

Notes to Chapter V

1. Ristuccia, ed., Intellettuati cattolici tra riformismo e dissenso negli anni '50-'60, pp. 44-45.
2. Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, pp. 9-10.
3. Interview with Luciana Castellina, New Left Review, no. 151 (May-June 1985), p. 30.
4. Ibid., pp. 34, 33.
5. Piero Pratesi, "La Chiesa italiana dopo il Concilio," Critica Marxista 14 (1976):59. See also Kogan, A Political History of Post-War Italy (From the Old to the New Center-Left), p. 50, and Suzanne Cowan, "Terrorism and the Italian Left," The Politics of Eurocommunism, Carl Boggs and David Plotke, eds. (New York and London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 180.
6. See especially Norman Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millenium (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), and Eric J. Hobsbawm, Primitive Rebels (New York: W. W. Norton, 1959). For historical Christian reform movements in Italy, see Vittorio Lanternari, Movimenti religiosi di libert  e di salvezza dei popoli oppressi (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1973) and, by the same author, "Religione popolare e contestazione," Testimonianze 12 (1969):708-728.
7. Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, pp. 16-18.
8. Interview with Ugo Pecchioli, L'Unit , 17 December 1977. For extremist new left groups, see also Gian Mario Bravo, L'estremismo in Italia (Rome: Riuniti, 1982).
9. For a lucid and eloquent statement on the theological and social evolution of the ritual of the mass as an expression of religiosity surging from the participation of the community, see Lelio Basso's trial defense speech of the Isolotto base community. In Basso, "Il travaglio della chiesa e della civilt  umana," Scritti sul cristianesimo, pp. 188-214.
10. Sidoti, "Questitalia e la polemica sui temi dell'organizzazione politica dei cattolici," Intellettuati cattolici tra riformismo e dissenso negli anni '50-'60, ed. Ristuccia, pp. 208-215 passim. See also Lanternari, "Religione popolare e contestazione."

11. Giuseppe De Rosa, S.J., "Cattolici e Comunisti 'provano' il dialogo," Civiltà Cattolica 116 (5 June 1965): 422-434. See also Danilo Zolo, "Appunti in margine alla 'prova del dialogo'," Testimonianze 8 (1965):260-273.

12. Mario Gozzini, "Comunisti e cattolici: quale dialogo?" Testimonianze 7 (April 1964):183-193; and by the same author, "Dialogo: i marxisti e la religione," Testimonianze 7 (June 1964):392-394.

13. Mario Gozzini, "Lettera sul dialogo," Testimonianze 8 (March 1965):202-217.

14. Aggiornamento ("bringing up to date") is a term applied to the Church during Vatican Council II. It meant modernizing the Church, while retaining its essential core of beliefs and structures. Lombardo-Radice is here sharing the general optimism of those days, investing the aggiornamento with a more radical meaning that it in fact was to have.

15. For Lucio Lombardo-Radice's views see the three articles in Rinascita quoted in chapter IV. See also the Lombardo-Radice - Zolo debate in Testimonianze 7 (November-December 1964). The whole debate was collected in Mario Gozzini, ed., Il dialogo alla prova (Florence: Vallecchi, 1964). For analyses of Lombardo-Radice and of the Communists' positions, see, among others, L. Fabbri, "Marxisti e credenti," Testimonianze 7 (August 1964):413-425; and by the same author, "Gli sviluppi del dialogo fra cattolici e comunisti," Testimonianze 8 (April 1965):200-216 and I comunisti e la religione (Rome: AVE Minima, 1965). Also useful is Ernesto Balducci, "Premesse per ogni dialogo," Testimonianze 8 (May-June 1965): 247-259.

16. Angelo Marchese, Marxisti e Cristiani (Turin: Borla, 1966).

17. Arnaldo Nesti, Il pensiero religioso di Antonio Gramsci (Dissertation, Rome: Pontificia Università Lateranense, Facoltà di Teologia, 1967), pp. 206-207, 212.

18. Domenico Rosati, La questione politica delle ACLI (Naples: Dehoniane, 1975), p. 21.

19. See Giovanni Bianchi e Carlo Sala, "Il dilemma delle sinistre cristiane," Testimonianze 20 (May-June 1977): 236-253.

20. Rosati, La questione politica delle ACLI, pp. 11, 12.

21. Ibid., pp. 15, 25, 22-23.

22. Ibid., pp. 30-31, 19.
23. Tramontin, La sinistra cattolica in Italia, pp. 107, 113.
24. Rosati, La questione politica delle ACLI, pp.38-39.
25. Michele Giacomantonio, "Dalle origini confessionali alla critica dell'interclassismo: 1944-1969," Relazioni Sociali, "Le ACLI fra interclassismo e scelta di classe: Trent'anni di storia delle ACLI," special issue devoted to ACLI, no. 5-6 (September-December 1973), p. 23. See also Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, pp. 65-66.
26. See, apart from Rosati and Giacomantonio, Giorgio Galli and Alfonso Prandi, Patterns of Political Participation in Italy: 1946-1963 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1970), especially pp. 189-190.
27. Michele Giacomantonio, "Fra ipotesi socialista e 'ripensamento'," Relazioni Sociali, no. 5-6 (1973), p. 36.
28. Ibid., p. 40.
29. Cuminetti, Il dissenso cattolico in Italia: 1965-1980, p. 177, quoting Pope Paul VI.
30. Giacomantonio, "Fra ipotesi socialista e 'ripensamento'," p. 42.
31. Ernesto Balducci and Emilio Gabaglio, Cristiani nel movimento operaio (Modena: Segnalazioni Sociali for ACLI, 1973), pp. 30-31, 34.
32. Giacomantonio, "Fra ipotesi socialista e 'ripensamento'," p. 51. As covered in Chapter IV, Octogesima Adveniens is a full, conservative reaffirmation of the validity of Catholic social doctrine, and a condemnation of Socialist ideologies and movements.
33. Ibid., p. 52.
34. Ibid., p. 41, quoting Domenico Rosati.
35. Ibid., p. 56.
36. Maria Cristina Sermanni, "Le ACLI e la 'governabilità': il convegno di Vallombrosa," Testimonianze 23 (September-October 1980), pp. 44-51 passim.
37. Azione Sociale, issue covering the theses submitted at the XVI National ACLI Congress, no. 31, 27 September 1984, p. 2.

38. Ibid., Thesis 5.12, p. 9.
39. Giacomantonio, "Fra ipotesi socialista e 'ripensamento'," p. 56.
40. Marguerite Gille, "Discorso introduttivo al III Convegno Europeo dei CPS," Il Tetto, no. 116 (March-April 1983), p. 250.
41. Bedeschi, Cattolici e comunisti: dal socialismo cristiano ai cristiani marxisti, p. 220, quoting Giulio Girardi.
42. Mario Cuminetti, "Cristiani per il Socialismo: dal Concilio all'attuale fase post-conciliare," Il Tetto, no. 65 (February 1974), pp. 45-46, quoting Giulio Girardi.
43. Giulio Girardi, "L'analisi di classe del mondo cattolico: una scelta strategica e teologica," Il Tetto, no. 84 (October-December 1977), p. 607.
44. Gille, "Discorso introduttivo al III Convegno Europeo dei CPS," pp. 248-251 passim.
45. Girardi, "L'analisi di classe del mondo cattolico: una scelta strategica e teologica," p. 609.
46. Milanesi, "Identità religiosa e impegno politico nei Cristiani per il Socialismo," Religione e politica. Il caso italiano, pp.214-215.
47. "Relazione della delegazione italiana al III Convegno Europeo dei CPS," pp. 250-251.
48. Girardi, "L'analisi di classe del mondo cattolico: una scelta strategica e teologica," p. 609.
49. Attilio Monasta, "Cattolici e scelta socialista," Testimonianze, 14 (August 1971):550.
50. Ibid., p. 551.
51. Riccamboni, "Partito comunista e mondo cattolico," pp. 189-190, 195.

CHAPTER VI

THE DIALOGUE COMES TO A CONCLUSION: LAICIZATION
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND RECOMPOSITION
OF THE CATHOLIC AREACompletion of the Communist Party's
Process of Laicization

During the 1970s a dramatic laicization of the PCI occurred through a further cleavage between politics and ideology in the Party. This was partly the result of the redefinition of the Party's ideology. As mentioned in Chapter II, the process of laicization begins with the adoption of Article 2 in the 1946 Statute which stated that only the political program of the Party must be accepted. The Party did not demand the sacrifice of religious and philosophical convictions of its members.

In Chapter II we described the evolution of the ideological and political positions of the party and the explication of the decisive remaking of the Party effected by Palmiro Togliatti starting in 1944. The completion of this process of laicization occurred at the 1979 XV National Party Congress. This process of laicization is due to the PCI's attempt to deal with the reality of the hegemony of the Catholic Church in Italian society. Thus the "Catholic question"--writes Chiarante--"has been, concretely, one of

the issues that the Communist policy of unity and of alliances has had to take into account."¹

The laicization of the Party is comprised of three specific aspects: a distinction between ideology and politics; the refusal of identifying the Party with only one variant of Marxism; and the acceptance of the unavoidability for the Party of "the contributions of a plurality of positions and traditions . . . with the most advanced experiences of culture, of research, and of science."² The laicization of the Party was expressed officially in the correspondence between Enrico Berlinguer and Bishop Bettazzi (1977), in changes in the Party's Statute effected at the XV (1979) and XVI (1983) Party Congresses, and in the proposals of the historic compromise and democratic alternative.

The identifying features of present Italian Communism take clear shape in this period. This includes the uniqueness of the Party's strategy, alliances, and analyses which come from the fact that its historical adversary is the Church. Thus, the Party's evolution is geared to circumventing the political and philosophical strategies of the Church which, through its political organizations, steadily commands between 35 and 38 percent of the electorate. As Giorgio Galli, a left historian, says of the 1944-1964 period,

. . . in these twenty years the DC has been a metaphysical party . . . the Catholic minority gets its mandate to govern not because of the voter's faith in the people's representatives but out of obedience to his bishop.³

This may be true even if we take into account the process of secularization under way, especially since Vatican Council II, after which the bishop or parish priest may be weaker in determining cultural and traditional attachments. The dialogue thus can be seen as a cutting edge which shapes the evolution of the PCI.

Enrico Berlinguer's Ethical Discourse

As in Chapter II, I will utilize the writings and speeches of the Secretary General of the PCI, in this case Enrico Berlinguer (1972-1984), as spokesman for the official party position. There are, however, clear minority dissenting lines within the Party, notably those of Armando Cossutta, Giorgio Amendola, and Pietro Ingrao. Yet Berlinguer's position represents the decisions reached by the Party after extensive debates. Thus, because of democratic centralism, Berlinguer's dicta are the expression of the unified action of the Party.

Like Togliatti, Berlinguer was very much influenced by the Party's Communist-Catholics, especially Franco Rodano and Antonio Tatò. Tatò, a former DC official, was Berlinguer's personal secretary. One peculiarity of Berlinguer as it relates to Catholicism is that, although a non-believer, he married a militant Catholic who raised their four children in the Catholic faith and had them attend parochial schools. As with Togliatti, the concern with the Catholic question

dominates much of Berlinguer's speeches and writings. He was persuaded that the future of the Party was intimately tied to the future of the Catholic masses, especially through alliances with their political organizations. Like Togliatti, he was extremely sensitive to innovations coming from the Church.

Thus in 1972, during his first years as Secretary General, he points out what the changes wrought by Vatican Council II meant for the Party:

Among the great novelties of the Council was the discovery of the centrality of the problem of the general earthly emancipation of man, and not just exclusively of his supernatural salvation, and the conviction that the solution to both of these problems involves a deep re-evaluation of the moment of collectivity.⁴

In noting that "the ideal framework of traditional Christian social doctrine is now broken . . . and one part of the Catholic masses and of the cadres of their lay organizations no longer accept the pretense of considering this as the sole . . . adequate reply to the earthly problems of man," Berlinguer offers to these Catholics the Party's

. . . collaboration to safeguard in our times those values that belong not only to the political sphere but to the sphere of social morality . . . Thus we repropose the full political and ideological validity of our meeting with the popular forces of the Catholic world.⁵

What is important in these passages is the emphasis that Berlinguer places on the values of social morality shared by both Marxism and Christianity. Thus he forcefully develops the ethical discourse initiated by Togliatti in the

1963 Bergamo speech. This ethical discourse is also present in all of Berlinguer's writings and speeches. Thus in his Report to the XV Party Congress he clearly reiterated Togliatti's position of complete respect for religious beliefs and of rejection of the classical interpretation of the Marxian analysis of religion as permanent alienation.⁶

This belief in the fusion and interpenetration of common values and aspirations in Marxism and Catholic Christianity reaches its climax in Berlinguer's Report to the XVI PCI Congress in 1983, one year before his untimely death:

To renew the foundations and enrich the horizon of ideas of the movement to transform society, a meeting with those movements that are derived from a different inspiration than the Marxist-inspired workers' movement is decisive . . . I refer in particular to religiously inspired movements.⁷

Berlinguer claims he is moved by the process of ideal and practical fusion which is occurring among militants in Latin America. While he recognized that religious institutions often contain conservative and even reactionary elements, he is quick to point out that this difference between movement and institution is also applicable to the Communist movement.

In Christianity from its origins there exists--as it exists in Socialism or in the workers' movement issued from Marxism--a profound demand for human liberation . . . These revolutionary characteristics were maintained by the Christian movement until it . . . tended to confuse itself with the State . . . and class interests . . . becoming an element of conservation of social structures. . . .

In a different sense, however, we could point out that in the Communist movement itself the theory of Marxism and of Leninism has taken on the shape, in most instances, of a State ideology and of a tool of government.⁸

Here Berlinguer refers to a comparable ossification and centralization of the Communist state in the Soviet-dominated European countries.

Berlinguer referred to the process of renewal initiated by John XXIII and the Council, as well as to Togliatti's argument that

. . . the major objective foundation for a meeting between Communist militants (whether believers or non-believers) and militants of Catholic associations for a recognition of reciprocal values . . . lies in the negative and degrading processes . . . of a capitalist society.⁹

He concludes his appeal by stressing that the Party fully accepts the Christian conception of the "autonomy of the moral from the political sphere . . . and that the uniqueness of a person is not fully absorbable in a political, economic, or social dimension."¹⁰

This is a most dramatic humanist elaboration of Marxian thought. Here Berlinguer goes much further than Togliatti and makes a decisive break with other interpretations of Marxism. It is in keeping with the Party's and with Berlinguer's parallel dramatic re-evaluation of the significance of the Russian Revolution and of the heritage of Marxism-Leninism, that will be discussed later in this chapter.

The "Laic" Nature of the Party and of the State

Radical theologian Giulio Girardi disagreed with

Berlinguer by saying that in the 1960s there had been, in effect, a progressive laicization of the Party, but that "a party cannot call itself laic . . . until the theory that inspires it is atheistic."¹¹ This contradiction came to a head on the occasion of the unusual initiative taken by Luigi Bettazzi, Bishop of Ivrea,¹² in an open letter to Berlinguer. The letter questioned the bond between the Party's social commitments and certain aspects of its ideology among which, in particular, atheism:

I am convinced that the presence of believers in your ranks brings you, too, to constantly rethink your position and to evaluate how much of your positions arise . . . out of a commitment to justice and to equality (which is the commitment that makes you so popular and gives you so much support) and how much, instead, continues to connect itself to certain ideological aspects and concrete practices that--even admitting they had a historically stimulating function--are not however, in the final analysis, essential for your politics among and on behalf of the people.¹³

Berlinguer's reply, as follows, was officially encoded in the revised 1979 Statute:

Is it maybe correct to say that the PCI as such, that is, as a party, a political organization, explicitly professes Marxist ideology as an atheistic, materialistic philosophy? . . . I would reply "no". . . Therefore the positions taken and the attitudes followed by the PCI over several decades up to today would make you acknowledge, Mr. Bishop, that . . . they constitute the valid guarantee that in the PCI there exists and operates the will, not only of constructing in Italy a laic democratic party and, as such, neither theist, nor atheist; but to want also, as a direct consequence, a laic and democratic state, it also therefore, neither theist, nor atheist, nor anti-theist.¹⁴

This separation of atheism from Communist ideology demands, however, a re-evaluation of the place of Marxism-

Leninism in the Party's heritage. Dissenting Catholics, while on one hand voicing a concern that this might lead to a de-ideologization of the Party with consequent loss of identity, ideological and cultural impoverishment, and general loss of militancy,¹⁵ on the other hand point out that the laicity of the Party should be formalized by revising Article 5 of the Statute. On a whole, this internal conflict over laicization is well accepted, even by Civiltá Cattolica. For left Catholics like Pasquale Colella, Mario Gozzini and Gianni Baget-Bozzo, "Communism has de facto reasserted in modern times the proclamation of Saint Paul: 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female.'"¹⁶ These left Catholics assert that their approach to Marxism is historical, not ideological, that Marxism is not a set of dogmas, and that the Marxian praxis, analysis, and heritage are not univocal. The political project of the Party includes values and cultural elements that are shared by Christianity, but the ideology itself is not shared. Thus, in respect of those members who profess a religious faith, the official party adherence to Marxism-Leninism should be modified.¹⁷

Article 5 stated that every party member "has the duty of acquiring and deepening (with the exceptions mentioned in Article 2) the knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and of applying its teachings to the solution of concrete issues." Thesis 15, approved at the XV Party Congress (1979), sanc-

tioned the principle of laicity as follows:

We do not conceive of the thought of Marx, Engels, and Lenin as a system of doctrines; therefore we hold that the formula "Marxism-Leninism" hasn't for a long time expressed the richness of our historical and ideological heritage. . . . Therefore . . . we must go beyond the limiting formula of Article 5.18

The revised Preamble to the Statute further specifies that the heritage of Marx, Engels, and Lenin

. . . is enriched by the contributions the Party makes along the lines of the critical reflections of Antonio Labriola, of the theoretical and political work of Antonio Gramsci and of Palmiro Togliatti . . . and the Party's original elaborations are always open to all the currents of modern thought.¹⁹

The Preamble goes on to reiterate that the Party is "aware that a Christian conscience, in the reality of the contemporary world, can become a stimulus to a commitment for the struggle towards a socialist transformation of society."²⁰

Article 5 is therefore substituted by Article 7, as follows:

Every party member must . . . c) extend his cultural and political knowledge and deepen the study of the history and of the heritage of ideas of both the Party and the workers' and revolutionary movement.²¹

These revisionist themes of the laic nature of the state, of a pluralistic society and of the re-evaluation of the October Revolution are not directly connected to the dialogue. They will be briefly covered; for they are part of the process of laicization of the Party. They are also important insofar as they are logical resolutions to the contradictions that had been exposed by the 1963 re-evaluation of the role of religious consciousness.

In his letter to Bettazzi, Berlinguer had stated that

the Party advocated a laic, democratic state. Thesis XII approved at the 1979 Congress develops the conception of the laic nature of the state into an affirmation of the bourgeois-democratic values of pluralism even accepting, in a socially transformed state, the existence and free activity of non-socialist parties:

Even when a society has been transformed in its economic base and the division into antagonistic classes has been eliminated, different interests will continue to exist, . . . from this is derived the possibility of the existence and function of different parties . . . even those who do not want the transformation of society in a socialist sense and are opposed to it. . . . All this, within the framework of constitutional democratic rules.²²

This is a fundamental revision of the Marxist-Leninist idea of themes of what is to be done, the idea of a pure, dedicated vanguard party, and the idea of a single élite party as in the Soviet Union, but they were deemed necessary pre-conditions if the dialogue were to continue.

Re-Evaluation of the Soviet Model

In December 1981, in the wake of the Polish government's repression of Solidarity, the Central Committee of the PCI drastically reduced the traditionally acknowledged importance of the value of the October Revolution as a model for future revolutions. This concretely and effectively resulted in the cutting of any remaining ideological and political dependence on the Soviet Union. "We consider"-- said the statement--"that the propelling force of one histor-

ical experience of Socialism, that of the political, state, and ideological model realized in the Soviet Union, has dried out."²³

Already at the XV (1979) Congress, however, the PCI had distanced itself from the Soviet model, in the context of developing its theory of an Italian way to Socialism, now presented as Eurocommunism. Thesis VI, approved at the Congress, stated:

The October Revolution and the construction of new societies in Russia and then in other countries . . . were a historical break with the system of imperialism and of capitalistic exploitation. At the same time, this great historical experience has revealed limitations, contradictions, and errors . . . especially concerning democracy. . . . It is evident in any case that the ways and models followed in these countries cannot be proposed for the socialist transformation of Western European countries such as Italy.²⁴

Thesis VII goes on to clarify that in the development of Eurocommunism no single universal model is possible, nor is there any one ideological orthodoxy, or any one center of political management. The struggle for Socialism must take place in the full expansion of democracy and of all other freedoms. This does not mean however that the "PCI wants to indicate universally valid solutions . . . [given that] the reality of the world-wide emancipation movement is polycentric."²⁵

There is nothing novel in this approach. It is no more than the coherent articulation of Togliatti's theme of polycentric, national ways to Socialism. Togliatti's claim was clearly and strongly made in the Yalta Memorial²⁶ in which

he argued that the autonomy of the party from a foreign or international managing body was not only an internal, national necessity for the development of the workers' movement in general, but it was an essential condition in those specific years for the Party in Italy. There is the possibility in Italy (as well as in France) of a peaceful conquest of positions of power within a state that still maintains an essentially bourgeois democratic structure. These conquests would require a gradual transformation, from within the state, of this structure.²⁷ Obviously, nothing could be farther than this model of socialist transformation from the model of the Soviet and Eastern European countries' coming to power of socialist parties.

New Communist Party Policy

According to political sociologist Peter Lange, post-war PCI strategy has consistently stressed a series of themes and principles for party action, that contain significant ambiguities. These have allowed tactical maneuverings in response to changing conditions. The maintenance of these ambiguities however became more difficult as the party increased in power and had to assume national responsibilities.²⁸ It may not be necessary to assume such a skeptical view of Italian Communism to agree that this is indeed the case with the theory of historic compromise as advocated by Berlinguer.

Theory of the Historic Compromise

Berlinguer first voiced his approach at the 1966 National Party Congress. He continued to develop it until 1973, when he first made it explicitly and directly. The themes of a dialogue with the Catholic masses, of the need for alliances with other mass parties and with other classes, the assertion of political pluralism, the proposals of Eurocommunism and, most recently, of a democratic alternative, and an Italian way to Socialism as envisioned by Togliatti--all converge and flow into the one concrete political plan which briefly became reality in the 1978-1979 government of national unity, a government coalition that included the PCI and the DC. The ultimate goal was a hoped-for joint government by the PCI and the DC.

According to Giovanni Bianchi, a Catholic of the dialogue, the historic compromise was in preparation from the time of Togliatti's first post-war strategy. It is the coherent final step of a long theoretical and political construction. "In this crisis of society, two great traditions, two hegemonies, that of Moro and that of Togliatti, would have reorganized social and political structures through a hegemony that would have given again sense and value to society."²⁹ For Bianchi, the historic compromise was seen by Togliatti as an effective way of playing upon the "deep sense of consciousness of Catholic believers faced with the anti-humanist aspects of the capitalist system."³⁰ The "moral

question" was also undoubtedly strong in Berlinguer's specific proposal of co-governance, to which was added his deep conviction that such an arrangement was the only democratic solution to the crisis situation of the 1970s.

The full version of the historic compromise and its political and theological justifications are found in Rodano's Questione democratica e compromesso storico (1977) (Democratic Question and Historic Compromise). Generally reputed to be the theoretician of the historic compromise, Rodano had been developing his ideas about the relations between the Party, Catholics and the DC since the 1940s, when his group issued the Manifesto of Communist-Catholics. In "La proposta del compromesso storico" (The Historic Compromise Proposal) Rodano answers accusations from the extra-parliamentarian left and the Socialists that the compromise was a distortion of Communist strategy and was no more than a pragmatic maneuver. According to Rodano the compromise is--in this situation of late capitalism--the only workable way to achieve a peaceful, democratic transition to Socialism. In the compromise, the working class would be able to achieve its hegemonic function of ultimate management of the state. This, however, would be accomplished democratically, and democratic "rules of the game" would remain as the normal form of the state.³¹

In "La questione democristiana" (The Christian Democratic Question) Rodano traces a history of the DC and of

Catholic integrism. According to this analysis, the DC can surmount its integrism only by allowing the hegemony of the working class, in line with Aldo Moro's long-standing policy of willingness to govern with the left. An effective hegemony of the working class requires both major mass parties to participate in government. The democratic framework of the state just could not be sustained if one of the major parties were not part of a governing coalition. Of course, Rodano implies that the situation after 1947 has not been in compliance with a truly democratic framework since one major mass party, the PCI, has been shut out of government.³²

Both parties can make crucial contributions to the achievement of the hegemony of the proletariat. On its part, the PCI must renounce Marxism as an ideology. It must consider Marxism as no more than a "fertile and inescapable lesson." On the other side, the Christian Democrats have a duty to Christianity to bring out and express politically the truths of the Party's Christian inspiration. Once Communists renounce Marxism as a doctrine, and once Catholics recognize the absoluteness only of God (and of the Church as the carrier of the message of spiritual salvation), the laic character of politics and of the state will be achieved, thus allowing for cooperative co-governance by both parties, ensuring the hegemony of the working class.³³ As reported at the beginning of this chapter, the Communist Party has made precisely the changes sought by Rodano at the 1979 Party

Congress. It was not clear, however, that during the short period of the actual government of national unity the hegemony of the working class or, less ambitiously, its economic interests, were served.

Berlinguer's first enunciation of the theory appears following the coup d'état in Chile.³⁴ In discussing the Party's politics, he notes that from alliances with the peasants and the lower middle class proposed by Togliatti in the 1940s, the Party went on to search for an alliance with the middle class in the 1960s, as a result of changed social and labor conditions. Then, he even hoped to enlist the alliance of those "progressive elements of capitalism" who would be interested in rationalizing the economy and in fighting monopoly capital. This policy of alliances involves a new system of political relations. The political and electoral strength of the left are an indispensable, but not a sufficient, condition to protect the workers' interests and create a Socialist society.

It is illusory to think that even if the left parties and forces reached fiftyone percent of the votes or of popular representation . . . that this would guarantee the survival and the work of a government that would be the expression of this fiftyone percent. . . . This is why we speak of a "democratic alternative," not of a "left alternative."³⁵

In the same article, Berlinguer then touches upon the "need for a greater reciprocal understanding and working entente with those movements and tendencies of Catholicism that . . . are anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist in orientation."³⁶

A crisis, the breakup of the country can only be avoided with a "constructive dialogue and an entente among all the popular forces. . . . By this we don't mean to meld the real difference in ideas and politics of these forces." In conclusion,

The gravity of the problems of the country . . . render urgent and ripe what we can define as the new great "historic compromise" among the forces that pull together and represent the great majority of the Italian people.³⁷

The problem of an alliance that would create a coalition for governing by the representatives of the large majority of the Italian population had already been presented under the theme of a new socio-historical bloc. For Berlinguer, it was an error to think that a revolution could be made and won by just the working class, "through the simple growth of the counterpower from below." The essential elements of any successful revolution is the "question of the alliances, i.e., the construction of a bloc of social, political and ideological forces around the historically revolutionary class."³⁸

The point of creating a new socio-historical bloc, for Berlinguer, is to reach strength and consensus. Pure voluntarism, or the spontaneous class thrusts of the more combative sections of the working class, cannot transform society:

In Italy a general transformation can take place only as a revolution of the great majority of the population; only on this condition do consensus and strength integrate. . . . The problem of alliances therefore is a decisive problem of any revolution.³⁹

A year later, in 1974, the proposal was formally submitted by Berlinguer at the XIV Party Congress. He persuaded the majority at the conference that this policy alone could furnish a positive, peaceful way out of the conflicts and discontents the country was experiencing. To many there seemed to be the beginning of a disintegration of the country, subject as it was to left-wing and right-wing terrorist actions, the oppression of large mass strata in the South, and militant union activism. The historic compromise was seen by Berlinguer as "the explication of the Italian way to Socialism which would at the same time morally regenerate the working classes and the people." The tragic experience of Chile had persuaded Berlinguer that a split of the country into two opposed enemy fronts must be avoided. Especially, that the PCI should try to prevent any fractures between working class and middle class, city and countryside. He concluded:

It is this basic inspiration of our policy that--in consideration of the peculiarity of the situation in Italy--leads us to propose and to work for the goal of establishing the guiding body of the country as being founded upon the entente of the great democratic and popular elements of Italian society and of any other progressive force. . . . The direct participation of the PCI to government responsibilities would . . . reanimate and reestablish trust among the workers and the people . . . this would be decisive to determine the commitment of workers and citizens all, necessary to surmount this most difficult present predicament.⁴⁰

Implementation of the Theory:
a Government of National Unity

The historic compromise placed the Party in a most difficult position. Its own slogan, to be simultaneously "a party of struggle and a party of government" contained a contradiction. How could the Party hope to carry out socialist reforms while governing with a party, the DC, that had always been opposed to any genuine reform? After the impressive 1976 electoral victory (34.4 percent to the Christian Democrats' 38.8 percent), the PCI aggressively demanded a legitimate representation in government. It was the Party's persuasion that the electoral results, the highest percentage ever reaped by the PCI, or by any Western Communist party, had fully legitimated the Party as a party of the government. The PCI could propose this alliance however because it had become legitimized (through the dialogue) in the eyes, if not of the Church, of the left wing of the DC, of progressive Catholic associations such as ACLI and CISL and, even more importantly, in the eyes of the "man in the street" who was still subjected to the "fragmented common sense" of the Catholic Weltanschauung in which anti-Communism played a large role.

This government of national unity was to be however, not one where the PCI would be formally a part of government, but merely a "stop gap government" wherein Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti "pledged a rigorous recourse to the heads of

all the parties of the Constitutional spectrum each time a new policy was to be discussed."⁴¹ Technically, this would happen when the PCI would be voted into the majority by the other Andreotti government parties (which included all the other parties of the Constitutional spectrum). What this amounted to in effect was that in this government "of national unity" the PCI would no longer play an oppositional role but would give its consent to legislation by abstaining in Parliament rather than opposing the parliamentary coalition.

The Italian people and the Italian Church witnessed this momentous political change quietly. The only opposition came, understandably, apart from the neo-fascist party, from the radical new left who accused the PCI of reformism, of complete rejection of whatever little had remained until then of revolutionary, specifically Leninist, direction. The Carter Administration was also strongly opposed to this setup. As La Palombara notes, "while United States government statements do not dictate Italian policy on this issue, they no doubt influence it. No one in Italy understands this better than the PCI and the DC."⁴²

The kidnaping and subsequent murder of Aldo Moro on the very day he was scheduled to speak in favor of the installation of the Andreotti government with the PCI in the majority, is seen by political commentators as a clear attack on the Italian Communist Party.⁴³ The Red Brigade members responsible for this murder have been arrested and sentenced

and have confessed.⁴⁴

The attack on Moro did not stop the government. On that day the PCI was voted without debate into the majority. This arrangement lasted from March 1978 to January 1979. Suspended by the PCI, it caused the Andreotti government to fall. In effect, during this time the party became the "assistant manager" of the DC. By refraining from opposing legislation submitted by the DC, it took on the role of defender of law and order, of the defender of the status quo. Several laws were passed in this time that restricted citizen freedom and gave unusual "emergency" powers to the state in its struggle against terrorism. Other laws were clearly unfavorable to the unions and the working class. During this time, the PCI relinquished its role as an oppositional force that had previously endowed it with strength and autonomy.⁴⁵

In assessing its experience of the government of national unity the Party, in the theses approved at the XV 1979 Congress, "reaffirms the correctness of the general orientation and choices made by the party since 1976." While acknowledging that the policy of national and democratic unity has reached a critical stage, accompanied by a climate of uneasiness, uncertainty and even of diffidence, the Party asserts that this situation was the result of the gravity of the country's crisis, and not of the government setup itself. The construction of a democratic state and a democratic society, "their progressive development towards

socialist-type solutions can and must take place through the involvement and participation of large and important components of the Catholic world." Thesis 70 thus stated:

To avoid the blocking of the potentialities for change that are present in the Christian consciousness . . . by an integrist, conservative closure, is a problem also of the workers' movement. It is necessary thus that the dialogue not be limited to ad-hoc problems, but be extended to the great historic issues of our time.⁴⁶

With direct reference to the Christian Democrats, the party claimed it tried to change its orientations in a progressive direction. Thesis 71 stated:

We reaffirm the full value of this inspiration as formulated in the historic compromise. . . . For the exigency of salvation and of progress of our society . . . we believe that the convergence and the meeting of the great Socialist, Communist and Catholic masses is indispensable, formulated in a politics of . . . national solidarity and responsibility.⁴⁷

Analysis: the Theory of Imperfect Bi-Partitism

It is useful to review the arguments on behalf of the historic compromise by Aldo Moro and his group. According to Filippo Mazzonis, Moro's reformist strategy was tacitly supported by Paul VI and it was known in the Church that Moro was acting all along with the Pope's placet.⁴⁸ The historic compromise was seen by Moro as one way of safeguarding the political predominance of the Christian Democratic Party. Moro had realized that "the future is no longer entirely in our hands." The state of diffuse corruption in the DC and its close association, even identification,

with the "distorted development" which the state and the economy had taken as a result of the Christian Democrats' government policies since 1948, made it necessary, according to Moro, "to inaugurate a third, difficult phase that would make the DC able to meet the seriousness of the state of emergency the country was experiencing." What this meant, concretely, was that the DC had to take account of changed power relationships in social and political reality. This meant confronting the "Communist question" and adapting to it, even to the point of renouncing, at least in part, to the full exercise of power.⁴⁹

Although he acknowledged that the "Catholic ideological discourse" was minimally considered in the concrete practice of the Party, Moro realized that this official identification with Catholic ideology constituted the necessary "glue" that guaranteed a minimum of homogeneity among the fragmented interest groups that made up the Christian Democratic Party. Moro expressed this:

. . . As if, having removed this Catholic ideological qualification, we had any other title left to govern the country than that of being the large traditional party that could tomorrow leave its place to another large party without ideals . . . which would risk, in turn, of becoming itself traditional.⁵⁰

The lack of a solid ethical project in the DC may be a result of a slackening of the Church's anti-Communist stance. The Party had previously received its identity and legitimation as the "Christian" party that was to be a bulwark against the threat of Communism. The effects of the Church's

rejuvenation through the Council's interpretation of its role in the world, with the consequent experience of the dialogue, could not be beneficial to the Christian Democrats since it may have alienated hard-line anti-communists. Some of the legitimation the Party had received in the pre-Council days inevitably wore off, for one of its major reasons for coming into existence no longer greatly mattered in Italian society. In place of responding to its core members, the DC and the PCI would, through the historic compromise, legitimize each other's rule.

Settembrini, one anti-clerical critic of the historic compromise, argues that the PCI and the DC are both "clerical" parties. That there is great affinity between them. The Communist Party is the historical metamorphosis of the Christian Democratic Party. This fundamental affinity became the basis of the Communist strategy in undertaking the historic compromise. By "clerical" as applied to the PCI Settembrini means that the Party is, like the Church, structured hierarchically; but most importantly, that like the Church it attempts to conquer and maintain ideological hegemony over society; and that, like the Church, it is persuaded it alone is privy to truth, therefore it alone ought to guide the masses. To do battle against one party, argues Settembrini, means to do battle also with the other party because both parties will reciprocally support and gain sustenance from each other. This accusation is not

new. The PCI has always refused to be anti-clerical in the sense of being opposed to institutionalized religion. Settembrini argues that the PCI's profession of "laicism" in the sense that the Party does not doctrinally adhere to Marxist-Leninist ideology and therefore, logically, it gives no preference to any ideology or religion and, by the same token, it does not discriminate against any ideology or religion--is purely tactical. The clericalism and the confessionalism of the PCI is even more threatening than that of the Catholic party. Generated each by the other, the parties condition and support each other. A co-governance of both parties would doubly oppress Italian society. This, in Settembrini's analysis, is the origin of the "imperfect bi-partitism" that is a permanent constitutive element of Italian politics.⁵¹

This tendency to split into two opposed blocs, each led by a party, is also mentioned by Tarrow (quoting Galli) as one obstacle to a creditable, new historical bloc. According to Giorgio Galli, the strongest upholder of the theory of bi-partitism,

. . . In Italy there are nine national parties, but two are more important than all the others: the DC and the PCI have given rise to a special political system, a democracy sui generis, an imperfect bi-partitism.⁵²

Galli notes that in their practical activities the two parties take on the traditional role of "right" and "left" in the total spectrum of parties. Together, for the past sixty years, the right and the left as represented, respectively,

by the liberal parties and the Socialist Party before the advent of Fascism, and by the DC and the PCI after Fascism, have consistently reaped three fourths of all the electoral votes. Since the war and the creation of the DC and the PCI this political alignment on the part of the Italian voters has not changed. In 1946, for example, 39.7 percent of the votes went to the left (PCI and PSI), and 35.2 percent to the DC. In 1963, the percentage was 39.1 for the left (PCI and PSI) and 38.3 for the DC. In 1979, the percentages were 41.9 (PCI and PSI) and 38.3 (DC). Neither the electoral campaigns nor the dialogue seem to have changed this alignment, at least up to 1979. Concludes Galli: "maybe the Catholic and Communist élites, who are ideological minorities, see the elections as a reconsecration of their legitimacy to govern to themselves and to the country."⁵³

The Roman Catholic Church

As discussed at length in Chapters IV and V, a doctrinal elaboration of Vatican Council II documents allows the questioning of dogma with respect to the political unity of Catholics. Now, not only the autonomy of political action is recognized, but also the autonomy of ideological elaboration.⁵⁴ However, the Italian Bishops' Conference (CEI) never accepted this interpretation of the Council's principles. A clerical, neo-integrist view of politics has been reimposed by CEI. Although the language now used is less clearly anti-

communist, CEI opposed the 1960s center-left government and, in the 1970s, the historic compromise. It also opposed any form of concrete, political collaboration with the PCI. Thus CEI has chosen to accept the form, but not the substance, of Pope John's message. Although it cites the documents and uses the language of the Council, CEI reiterates at practically every election the importance of the unity of Catholics behind the Christian Democratic Party, and even cites Council documents in support of its position. For the bishops, traditional Catholic social doctrine is still an adequate and valid analysis of society's ills. As concerns Italian politics, this view is also shared by the new Polish Pope, John Paul II (Karolus Wojtila).

On April 13, 1985 the New York Times reported in an article entitled "Pope Asks Italian Catholic Vote" that

Pope John Paul II, speaking a month before the important local elections in Italy, has urged this country's Roman Catholics to stand united politically, so as to serve "the supreme good of the nation." His speech was welcomed by Christian Democrats, though some were reluctant to declare that the Pope had urged a vote for their party.⁵⁵

The article goes on to say that secular parties, particularly those of the left (but not the Communists), condemned the Pope's statement as an "inappropriate entry into affairs of the laity." And Franco Bassanini, a Catholic member of Parliament for the Independent Left Group, called the Pope's speech "a move backward from Vatican Council II" which, he said, "had recognized the laic nature of the state and Catholic political pluralism."⁵⁶

Bishops' Conference and Pope's Position:
 "One Can't Be Simultaneously
 a Christian and a Marxist"

In the opinion of many, 1975 marks the de facto end of the probing, conciliatory attitude of the Church towards Marxist ideology. The positions of the Italian Bishops' Conference, of Civiltá Cattolica and even of Pope Paul VI-- who had not been totally anti-communist in the 1950s and 1960s, and was reputed by many to have favored the center-left government of Moro and Moro's opening to the left parties in general--became clearly anti-communist on both the doctrinal and the political level.

In a document of December 1975, CEI stated the "irreconciliability of Christian faith and of Marxism." On February 1976 it pronounced that "one cannot be simultaneously a Christian and a Marxist." In a May 1976 document prepared specifically in view of the forthcoming elections where prominent Catholics such as Raniero La Valle, Piero Pratesi, and Mario Gozzini were running on the newly formed Independent Left Group aligned with the PCI, the Bishops wrote:

We reassert the theoretical and practical irreconciliability between Christianity and atheistic Communism. As a consequence, we reassert the irreconciliability between professing the Christian faith and adhering, favoring or supporting an authentic Marxist movement, even when one states that one does not share that ideology.⁵⁷

Shortly thereafter, and just a few days before the elections, Paul VI reaffirmed the Bishops' position: with reference to "the incompatibility between Christianity and Marxism" and to

the presence of well-known individuals of the Catholic faith on the PCI electoral slate, he stated:

The heritage of Christian faith can be neither camouflaged nor compromised, otherwise it will cease to exist; it cannot be conjoined with visions that are totally and intrinsically opposed to the nature of the Christian faith. . . . Nor do we think . . . tolerable, to adhere, especially publicly, to a political expression that is both ideologically and historically, radically opposed to our religious conception of life.⁵⁸

In sum, this position is substantially the same as that of the well-known 1960 article published in Civiltá Cattolica where the journal took a clear position on the possibility of a center-left government with the PSI. In "Punti fermi" (Fixed Points) it was asserted that

. . . the irreducible antithesis between the Marxist system and the Christian doctrine is self evident. . . . Therefore the Church cannot allow the faithful to adhere to, favor or support those movements that adopt and follow Marxist ideology and its applications.⁵⁹

The pre-Vatican Council II stance of the Bishops covers not only this resistance to Marxism and to the left parties, but also their relationship with the religious communities. An editorial in the journal Testimonianze notes, for example, that dissenting Catholics were not invited to the Congress "Evangelization and Promotion of Man" held in 1976. To all effects, this Congress marked the beginning of the Church's efforts at the attempt to "recompose" the Catholic constituency. CEI, according to Testimonianze, did not take stock of post-Council sensibilities. The Bishops did not consult with the faithful. They proposed a vague, imprecise "excommunication." Previous

excommunications had been superseded by John XXIII and the Council experience. However, the final CEI document issued out of the 1976 Congress maintained that

. . . Those believers who adhere to ideological systems that are radically opposed to . . . the Christian faith and the conception of man from it derived . . . including those that profess a materialistic and atheistic vision of life . . . in effect are excommunicating themselves.⁶⁰

Most importantly, the distinction made by John and the Council as to ideologies and historical movements is disregarded. The character of self-excommunication refers not only to an adherence to Marxist ideology, but also to "the adherence and support of those movements that, even in different forms, are founded upon Marxism, which in our country finds its fullest expression in Communism. . . . All of these are incompatible with the Christian faith."⁶¹

A January 1976 editorial in Civiltá Cattolica, while supporting the central CEI document assertion that "one can't be simultaneously Christian and Marxist," found the document somewhat "reductive" and analyzed the phenomenon of those Christians who have made a class choice. This article gives a clear typology of these believers, and of their religious and political motivations. These believers are classified by the journal into the following three types:

1. "Marxist Christians." They accept, albeit critically, all the major theses of Marxism, from historical materialism to a radical critique of capitalism. They also accept the theory and method of class struggle and even

atheism, which is understood as a negative moment of religiosity

2. "Christians for Socialism." They adopt Marxism as a scientific analysis of capitalist society and as revolutionary praxis. However, on the whole, they do not completely embrace Marxist philosophy even if some, like Giulio Girardi, propose a "dialectical unity" of Marxism and Christianity with both no longer understood as finished systems of thought but as dynamic systems that can question and renew themselves

3. "Christians who find in Marxism the theoretical and practical tools for class struggle against capitalism." They work inside Marxist parties or cooperate with them. However they leave faith on a plane autonomous of political action, even if their faith contains a push to commitment to a class choice and class struggle.

On the whole, these three types of believers, said Civiltá Cattolica, are pushed towards an adoption of Marxism by the following: (1) the awareness of the inability of historical Christianity to create a more just social system; (2) the awareness of a radical structural injustice in capitalism; (3) the ideological pretext offered to capitalism by the very social doctrine of the Church, which has historically revealed itself as sterile; and (4) the historical effectiveness of "scientific" socialism and of the class struggle.⁶²

This apparently objective and sympathetic presentation of the varieties of Marxist Christians is counterweighted by

a traditional, integrist, pre-Council evaluation of Marxism and its intrinsic connection to atheism, notwithstanding certain "statements in favor of religion made by certain Marxist parties," a clear reference to the PCI. In effect, says the journal, "Marxism, even more than an atheistic doctrine and a revolutionary praxis, has a secularist spiritual atmosphere. . . . Those who breathe it run the risk, sooner or later, of losing their faith."⁶³

The Recomposition of the Catholic Constituency

Father Bartolomeo Sorge, S.J., the director of Civiltá Cattolica, in 1976 readily acknowledged that "Italy can no longer be defined as a Catholic country in the traditional sense of the term." This crisis in Catholicism (and in the Catholic party) cannot be overcome by either the diaspora or a neo-integrist Catholicism. "Without tying its future to a party or to a régime, the Church must, in the spirit of the Council, make its voice heard on behalf of the promotion of man, of justice, and of peace."⁶⁴ Sorge is the theoretician of what has been called "the recomposition of the Catholic constituency." Given the de facto end of the political unity of Catholics and of the practice of collateralism, and the general state of crisis of Catholic (as well as Marxist) culture, Sorge suggests that

. . . a political meeting on an emergency program is necessary . . . but this can have meaning and perspective only if it takes place within a larger process of the moral reconstitution of the country, on a pre-political

and cultural plane rather than on a specific political plane tied to a specific party.⁶⁵

Catholics therefore are advised that the solution does not lie in searching for a historic compromise which, he argues, cannot be proposed today--neither ideologically nor politically. But Catholics are encouraged to confront their values with Marxism and with other non-Christian ideologies. Again, the dialogue is here proposed in the same no-exit way that it had been proposed in the same journal in 1964.⁶⁶

Sorge refuses to accept a neo-integrist approach:

. . . The problem Catholics face today is no longer that of attempting a new global synthesis, as Saint Thomas did . . . but to set up a dialogue--at the same time critical and constructive--with all the ideologies of our times, including Marxism.⁶⁷

Given the fact that the Christian Democratic Party is no longer the aggregating organization solely representing the Catholic world, Sorge, along with CEI and the hierarchy in general, seems to prefer a pluralism of religious groups that can operate directly at the social and political level. Now that ACLI and CISL are too politicized in a left-wing sense and that AC is too closely connected with DC, these new groups would seem to be capable of being more directly controlled by the Church than the traditional collateral organizations. The most important and best-known of these groups is the neo-integrist religious-political movement *Comunione e Liberazione* (Communion and Liberation), which

has John Paul II's approval. At present, this movement gathers between 100,000 and 150,000 young people.⁶⁸

In assessing the Catholic world from the Council to the 1976 elections, Communist Carlo Cardia notes, first of all, that whereas in the 1960s the term "Catholic world" was used, denoting organicity and compactness of structure, culture, and political orientation, today one speaks of a "Catholic area." There is no longer a simply univocal or simply political concept for Catholics. The 1960s up to 1975 were years of transformation, renewal, dissent. Structural modifications of the Catholic area include qualitative as well as quantitative changes in the front organizations (AC, ACLI, CISL, FUCI), which resulted in the end of the political unity of Catholics. These organizations were the "connecting chains" between the Church and individual Catholics. These chains of command are now broken.⁶⁹

This cultural and structural crisis however has not resulted, according to Cardia, in a

. . . historical supersession of the relationship between the Christian Democratic Party and strong Catholic social forces although, undeniably, the centrality of the DC in national and in Catholic political life is in crisis. This fall in hegemony has brought an awareness of the necessity, on the part of the Church and of the DC, of a "recapturing" or "recomposition" of some form of Catholic political unity.⁷⁰

This proposal was explicitly presented at the CEI Congress on "Evangelization and Promotion of Man" held in November 1976.

Cardia does not see this program as essentially a program of restoration, although there are clear neo-integrist

elements in it. This attempt at re-solidifying the Catholic area has taken on the following characteristics: (1) there is a crisis among the radicalized believers, evidenced by the lack of growth of groups such as the base communities and the Christians for Socialism; (2) the parishes are offering renewed cultural and religious activities; (3) new groups are quickly expanding that seem crucial to this re-constitution: Comunione e Liberazione, Focolarini (Little Hearths), Mani Tese (Extended Hands), Catholic Scouts. All these groups are closely monitored by the hierarchy.⁷¹

The post-Council crisis has definitely left a Catholic presence in left parties, especially the PCI. This presence is now considered a structural element of national politics. Cardia does not approve of the presence of Catholics in radical new left groups which, in his estimation, "pulverize certain Catholic sectors in their contact with political reality."⁷² While the DC claims that it still represents the Catholic constituency, it clearly cannot represent the new needs and claims that are being voiced by the Catholic groups issued out of the fragmentation of Catholic culture.

Like Berlinguer, Cardia feels that the new sensibilities of Catholics can be the basis for "dialogue and confrontation" in the Gramscian vision of a "moral and intellectual reform." Like Berlinguer and Moro, Cardia sees the possibility for a growing number of believing Catholics

entering in the Communist Party or collaborating with it, on the basis of certain moral and ethical concerns and aspirations, that the Catholic party can no longer offer.⁷³

Notes to Chapter VI

1. Chiarante, "Laicità, questione cattolica, questione democristiana," p. 70.
2. Enrico Berlinguer, "Prospettive di trasformazione e specificità comunista in Italia," Critica Marxista 19 (1981): 12-13.
3. Giorgio Galli, Il bi-partitismo imperfetto: comunisti e democristiani in Italia (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1966), p. 74.
4. Enrico Berlinguer, "Il travaglio del mondo cattolico e i suoi riflessi politici," (1972) La questione comunista, ed. Antonio Tatò, 2 vols. (Rome: Riuniti, 1975), 1:401.
5. Ibid., 1:401-403 passim.
6. Enrico Berlinguer, "Rapporto e conclusioni," Partito Comunista Italiano, XV Congresso Nazionale. Atti e risoluzioni, 2 vols. (Rome: Riuniti, 1979), 1:639.
7. Enrico Berlinguer, "Rapporto e conclusioni," Partito Comunista Italiano, XVI Congresso Nazionale. Atti, risoluzioni, documenti, 2 vols. (Rome: Riuniti, 1983), 1:36.
8. Ibid., 1:36-37.
9. Ibid., 1:38.
10. Ibid., 1:38-39.
11. Giulio Girardi, "Il marxismo di fronte alle esperienze religiose rivoluzionarie," Critica Marxista 21 (1983):171.
12. Bishop Bettazzi, a moderate, is currently President of Pax Christi's Italian branch.
13. Antonio Tatò, ed., Comunisti e mondo cattolico oggi. (Rome: Riuniti, 1977), p. 22, quoting Bishop Bettazzi.
14. Enrico Berlinguer, "Comunisti e cattolici: chiarezza di principi e basi di un'intesa," Rinascita, 14 October 1977, pp. 3-5.
15. See Piero Bellini, "Un'umanesimo alla prova: la questione religiosa nella lettera di Berlinguer a un Vescovo cattolico," Il Tetto, no. 86 (March-April 1978), pp.157-179, and Biagio De Giovanni, "Novità ed importanza del confronto della classe operaia con il mondo cattolico," in the same issue, pp. 180-185, as a rejoinder to Bellini. The argument

that the Party's laicization leads to loss of identity and, eventually, to "Western reformism" is shared by the new left. See Lucio Magri, quoted in F. Lombardi, S.J., "Il PCI e la proposta di alternativa democratica," Civiltà Cattolica 134 (2 April 1983):72-83.

16. See Pasquale Colella, "La lettera di Berlinguer a Mons. Bettazzi: premessa ad un dibattito," Il Tetto, no. 86 (March-April 1978):150; and Gianni Baget-Bozzo, I cattolici e la lettera di Berlinguer (Florence: Vallecchi, 1978).

17. See Roberto De Vita and Mario Gozzini, "Credenti e militanza politica nella sinistra," Testimonianze 21 (January-March 1978):31-32, 35.

18. Partito Comunista Italiano, XV Congresso Nazionale. Atti e risoluzioni, 2 vols. (Rome: Riuniti, 1979), 2:640.

19. Ibid., 2:760.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid., 2:764. See also E. Perna's "Relazione sulla Revisione dello Statuto," in Ibid., 1:597, 599.

22. Partito Comunista Italiano, XV Congresso Nazionale. Atti e risoluzioni, 2:638.

23. Berlinguer, "Rapporto e conclusioni," XVI Congresso Nazionale. Atti, risoluzioni, documenti, 1:33.

24. Partito Comunista Italiano, XV Congresso Nazionale. Atti e risoluzioni, 2:632.

25. Ibid., 2:633-634.

26. Togliatti's last writing, composed at Yalta in August 1964 just before his death.

27. Togliatti, "Promemoria di Yalta," (1964), Opere Scelte, pp. 1177-1178.

28. Peter M. Lange, "Crisis and Consent, Change and Compromise: Dilemmas of Italian Communism in the 1970s," Italy in Transition: conflict and Consensus, eds. Peter M. Lange and Sidney G. Tarrow (Totowa, N.J.: Frank Cass, 1981), pp. 111-112.

29. Giovanni Bianchi, "A vent'anni dalla morte di Palmiro Togliatti," Testimonianze 27 (September-October 1984): 37-38.

30. Ibid., p. 37.

31. Franco Rodano, "La proposta del compromesso storico," Questione democristiana e compromesso storico (Turin: Boringhieri, 1977), pp. 113-117, 151.
32. Rodano, "La questione democristiana," Ibid., pp. 102-106.
33. Ibid., pp. 107, 108-112.
34. Enrico Berlinguer, "Via democratica e violenza reazionaria," Rinascita, 28 September 1973, pp. 1-2. Also, by Berlinguer, "Alleanze sociali e schieramenti politici," Rinascita, 5 October 1973, pp. 3-4.
35. Enrico Berlinguer, "Riflessioni sull'Italia dopo i fatti del Cile," (1973), La questione comunista, 2:633, 609-639 passim.
36. Ibid., 2:634.
37. Ibid., 2:638-639.
38. Enrico Berlinguer, "Classe operaia e blocco sociale," (1971) La questione comunista, 1:264-265.
39. Berlinguer, "Riflessioni sull'Italia dopo i fatti del Cile," (1973), La questione comunista, 2:628-629.
40. Enrico Berlinguer, "Per l'intesa delle grandi forze popolari," (Part 4 of Report to the Party's Central Committee, 1974) La questione comunista, 2:918-919.
41. Joseph La Palombara, "Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: the PCI's Struggle for Legitimacy," Italy at the Polls, 1979: A Study of the Parliamentary Elections (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1981), p. 123. See also Joanne Barkan, "Italian Communism at the Crossroads," The Politics of Eurocommunism, eds. Carl Boggs and David Plotke, pp. 49-77.
42. La Palombara, Ibid., p. 123, note 43. See also Roberto Faenza and Marco Fini, Gli americani in Italia, with preface by William Domhoff (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1976), the most completely documented book on the subject.
43. Sidney G. Tarrow, "Thirty Years of Italian Democracy," Italy at the Polls, 1979: A Study of the Parliamentary Elections, p. 18.

44. The widespread persuasion in Italian political circles that the essentials of Italian foreign policy are dictated by Washington leave one speculating about the credibility of the insistent talk of a possible connection between Red Brigades "Moro action" members and CIA agents shortly before and during the kidnaping. This is even more disturbing considering that some of these indications have come from the testimony at the Red Brigades trial given by Aldo Moro's widow.

45. Suzanne Cowan, "Terrorism and the Italian Left," The Politics of Eurocommunism, eds. Carl Boggs and David Plotke, p. 190.

46. Partito Comunista Italiano, XV Congresso Nazionale. Atti e risoluzioni, 2:695.

47. Ibid., 2:695-696.

48. Mazzonis, "Mondo cattolico e DC nella realtà italiana," pp. 114, 117. Prima facie, this assertion of Paul VI's placet is shocking. One could speculate that the historic compromise might be more acceptable to the Church than simply a left alternative government, especially since the PSI is a strongly anti-clerical party. As long as Catholic ideology is safely respected however, the historic compromise would not seem threatening to the Church's legitimacy.

49. Ibid., p. 115.

50. Ibid., p. 121, quoting Aldo Moro.

51. Settembrini, La chiesa nella politica italiana, pp. 11-12, 34 and passim.

52. Galli, Il bi-partitismo imperfetto: comunisti e democristiani in Italia, p. 70.

53. Ibid., p. 130.

54. Riccamboni, "Partito comunista e mondo cattolico," p.185.

55. The New York Times, 13 April 1985, p. 3A.

56. Ibid. See also La Repubblica, 12 April 1985.

57. Alceste Santini, "I cattolici nell'Italia che cambia," Critica Marxista 15 (1977):91.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid., pp. 93-94, quoting Civiltá Cattolica.
60. 'Editorial covering the CEI Congress Evangelization and Promotion of Man,' Testimonianze, 18 (1975):530-531, quoting the final CEI document.
61. Ibid.
62. Editorial "Fede cristiana e marxismo: 'Non si puó essere simultaneamente cristiani e marxisti'," Civiltá Cattolica 127 (17 January 1976):105-107.
63. Ibid., 114, 115.
64. Santini, "I cattolici nell'Italia che cambia," p. 109, quoting Father Bartolomeo Sorge.
65. Bartolomeo Sorge, S.J., La 'ricomposizione' della area cattolica in Italia (Rome: Città Nuova, 1979), pp. 39-40. See also Bartolomeo Sorge, I cattolici nell'Italia che cambia (Rome: Cinque Lune, 1976), and Giuseppe De Rosa, S.J., Chiesa e comunismo in Italia (Rome: Coines, 1970).
66. Sorge, La 'ricomposizione' dell'area cattolica in Italia, p. 41.
67. Santini, "I cattolici nell'Italia che cambia," p. 110, quoting Father Sorge.
68. For literature on these movements, see especially Acquaviva, Guizzardi and Milanesi, "Nouvelles formes de religiosité et développement socio-économique en Italie," p. 173. See also Carlo Cardia, "L'area cattolica dopo il 20 giugno 1976," pp. 48-53, and Gentiloni, "DC, mondo cattolico e società italiana," pp. 4-5.
69. Cardia, "L'area cattolica dopo il 20 giugno 1976," pp. 37-39.
70. Ibid., pp. 43-45.
71. Ibid., pp. 48-53 passim.
72. Ibid., p. 57.
73. Ibid., p. 68.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is divided into three parts. First, some comments on the methodological aspects of the study and of the documents available. Then, a specifically political analysis of where the Communist Party and the Catholic Party stand with the Italian electorate, with a view to ascertaining what the political results of the dialogue between the PCI and the Church have been. Thirdly, I will place my analysis within the larger theoretical contexts of the concepts of secularization, cultural and political hegemony, legitimation of institutions, role of social and religious movements, and role and nature of ideologies.

Methodological Conclusions

The methodological complexities I have encountered are a function of the subject matter itself. The dialogue has meant many things to many kinds of people. It is, first, an intellectual and cultural debate; second, a diplomatic overture; and third, a means of focusing of one's self-image. It is above all a sounding board for inflecting changes in social reality. Finally it is a tool of self-legitimation, a justification for policy changes and for political action.

The main distinction that I have attempted to make in the phenomenon of the dialogue is the distinction between the dialogue as conducted by institutions, and as conducted by social movements and individuals. In the final analysis, ideological statements are the means of self-rationalization for all entities, but they do so differently for institutions, groups and individuals.

The other major distinction that I attempted was between how much of the dialogue was intellectualized, in the sense of being a rationally thought-out program of separate institutions, and how much did the ideological phenomenon reflect real changes occurring at the grassroots level and ultimately in the social.

To further understand the dialogue, I had to attempt a distinction between the dialogue as presented by the institutions, and as received by the institutions' grassroots membership and by society at large.

A further clarification has to be made in the respective cases of the Church and the Communist Party, between their institutional aspect and their movement aspect, i.e. between their function as political organizations and simultaneously as movers of society: in other words, between maintaining their established institutions and traditions and attempting to move in new directions. Both institutions have been found to be sluggish, unwilling to shed obsolete practices and ideologies.

The documents were not easy to decode. It was possible to decode them only after I had begun to distinguish who was writing and for whom or for what end. In this respect, I found that some of the most trenchant and perceptive assessments and analyses of the dialogue came from the Catholics of "the diaspora," those who had made a radical class choice that pitted them against both the Church and the Party. Their position had been formerly inside an institution: once they had genuinely embraced the dialogue, many had become both religiously and politically radicalized. Their analyses proceeded on many levels, not the least of which was based upon a revolutionary passion that is almost extinct in both institutions. Their status as a non-belonging minority, their deep dissatisfaction with the status quo gives them, I believe, a real quest for new answers.

Finally, it was not easy to decode the various levels of language of the Church and the Party. Only after I had embraced an initial assumption that they would behave in an analogous manner in justifying and rationalizing their goals and actions, was it possible to understand their expressly convoluted, theological language. The Church, I found, was sending clear political messages when it spoke in the language of theology and morality; and conversely, the Party was beaming what were essentially moral and ethical messages when it spoke politics. For example, the Church's right to intervene in political issues was so justified:

The concept 'politics' means . . . a set of principles and rules of public life: insofar as politics indicates human activity informed by these principles and rules, then politics cannot fall outside of the moral sphere. Thus, since every political act cannot not be at the same time invested with a character of morality and justice, from this fact the Church derives its right of intervention--from the point of view of the moral aspect of political issues.¹

. . . Communist, Socialist and Massonic organizations are three armies mobilized by Satan for the execution of His criminal plans.²

The party's ethical message is discernible in the following excerpts from Berlinguer's Report to the XVI PCI Congress of 1983:

To renew the foundations and enrich the horizon of ideas of the movement to transform society, a meeting with those movements that are derived from a different inspiration than the Marxist-inspired workers' movement is decisive. . . . I refer in particular to religiously inspired movements.

. . . In Christianity from its origins there exists, as it exists in socialism or in the workers' movement issued from Marxism, a profound demand for human liberation.³

The leading hypothesis that has proven to be the most fruitful is the one which treated the Church as a Party and the Party as a Church. Although one institution is almost two thousand years old, and the other institution barely 65 years old, they both function as the major political, cultural, and moral interlocutors in Italian society.

As Gramsci perceptively observed, every process of unification in Italy had to take into account the "Catholic question." The non expedit of Pius IX by which, from 1874 to the First World War, Italian Catholics were barred from voting or running for election, had essentially the same

meaning that the 1949 excommunication of Communists and Socialists had in the cold war period. Pius IX had reacted to the unification of Italy into a nation, with the consequent removal, by plebiscite and the invasion of the King of Piedmont and Sardinia's troops, of about one third of the Italian peninsula from the temporal power of the Pope. The non expedit and the Popes' self-imposed exile until 1929 signified the refusal on the part of the Church to face a political situation that had shrunk its privileges considerably. Similarly, after the Second World War, the Church acted to maintain its privileges; this required barring Catholics from subscribing to ideologies and political movements that questioned the truths on which the Church's power is based. The dialogue approach was one way of circumventing the intransigence of the Church.

Political Conclusions

According to most political sociologists such as Sidney Tarrow, Peter Lange, Donald Blackmer and Giorgio Galli, the Italian Communist Party is neither Leninist, nor reformist, nor Social Democratic. This study certainly corroborates their point of view. It is a unique Communist party and its uniqueness derives from the fact that, following Gramsci's analysis of Italian society, it has adapted and evolved with one steady reference point, the Church and the Church's cultural and political hegemony over Italian society. The

Catholic resistance to change analyzed by Gramsci has been the one obstacle that the Party has tried to overcome especially after 1944. The Party's policy since 1944 has entailed calling upon the working class to adjust its interests to the common national good, therefore urging alliances with other classes and strata. On the contrary, Leninist and Social Democratic parties perceive the interests of the working class as external to capitalist bourgeois interests. The PCI locates the interests of the working class within the capitalist and bourgeois crisis and actively seeks to "transform the institutions from within: it feels that it has a stake in the existing institutions."⁴

The dialogue and its political conclusion, i.e. the historic compromise, are certainly crucial steps in the Party's attempts to solve the "Catholic question," but they cannot be said to have been successful. Nor does an analysis of Gramsci's writings on the Church and the Catholic question, as illustrated in Chapter I, lead us to believe that the Party's strategy is the one envisioned by Gramsci.

According to Gramsci, the project of the Modern Prince was to carry out an intellectual and moral reform that would involve all of society. It meant introducing a new, totalizing Weltanschauung. Gramsci favored an alliance of the industrial workers with other classes such as peasants and the lower middle class, but he never favored an alliance with other bourgeois parties, nor did he favor an alliance with the Church.

The outcome of the dialogue from a political point of view, however, has been precisely the opposite, a co-governance, or twin rule, by the PCI and the DC. This policy of the Communist Party, now called the "democratic alternative," fully accepts the legitimacy of the DC and, on the level of ideology, it accepts the legitimacy of the Catholic Weltanschauung. Rather than a process of "intellectual and moral reform" where Marxism would become a new conception of the total world, a new "common sense" that would literally replace the traditional Catholic Weltanschauung, the dialogue has had the effect of legitimating both ideologies, as if indeed they could co-exist in human consciousness, and as if two universal institutions such as the Party and the Church could co-exist without conflict.

The original goal of the Party, in Togliatti's reading of Gramsci, was to develop a strategy of "self-insertion" by the Party in civil society.⁵ This meant that, concurrently with the development of a pluralist type of capitalism in Italy and of the pragmatism of the PCI's analysis, the Party would develop a strategy of adaptation. Both Togliatti and Berlinguer believed that a transformation to Socialism can take place only with the coalition of major groups and classes, but this new coalition has become understood as a coalition of parties of different interest groups and classes. The penetration into the "trenches and fortifications of civil society," to use Gramsci's words, would have the purpose of

transforming the consciousness of social groups, to transform them ideologically. What Gramsci understood as the building of a new social-historical bloc has, with the historic compromise resulting from the dialogue, been reduced to a governing bloc of parties. The DC as a political party representing the Church and the upper bourgeoisie, has become a mediating institution. The PCI did not reach the grassroots of the constituencies of the non-PCI parties.

The reality of Italian society has been unfavorable to this model of self-insertion and adaptation (from the point of view of Gramsci's original perspective.) The result has been a systematic penetration of all sectors and classes of society by the Church. Well-financed and well-organized Catholic associations, groups and organizations rival the PCI at all levels of civil and political life. In the words of Sidney Tarrow,

. . . Postwar politics in Italy emerged as a bipolar confrontation between two organized subcultures, each of which was attempting to colonize Italian society from top to bottom. . . . Between an organized Catholic subculture and an organized Marxist one, there would be a competing attempt to colonize whole sectors of Italian society and even, perhaps, an ultimate possibility of ruling together in a repubblica conciliare.⁶

Since the 1960s the Party, faced with apparent electoral stagnation, has been tempted to approach its goals no longer through the "trenches and fortifications of civil society" but by a compromise with the existing political ruling class. The justification was that they could thereby transform the structures of the neo-capitalist state from within.⁷ However,

the government of national unity (March 1978-January 1979) caused a strengthening of the structures of the state, especially of its police powers, through the passage of the Reale "emergency" laws that greatly reduced personal freedoms, in an attempt to combat terrorism. Rather than the explanation that Berlinguer gave for this failure--that the historic compromise failed as a result of contingent economic and political reasons--it is fair to assume that transforming the structures of a capitalist state from within, while at the same time governing together with other parties that aim to maintain and reinforce the status quo, creates an ambiguous situation, to say the least. A party cannot be at the same time "a party of struggle and a party of government."

With specific reference to the dialogue, if the dominant political institutions in Italy are the PCI and the Church, then the party's call for a dialogue can be explained by the need, on the part of the PCI, to have its program of compromise legitimized by the Church. Only by accepting this thesis can one understand this diplomatic-type of exchange of respective views and positions, as if from potentate to potentate. But, maybe, the dialogue was propelled by the rejection of Russian Communism and the need of the Italian Communists to disavow the Soviet Union after Hungary and Czechoslovakia, at the risk of losing its traditional Italian following.

Neither the Party nor the Church wanted to carry the dialogue any further than on the cultural plane. None of the

parties to the dialogue envisaged a "fusion" of both ideologies. The Church claimed that the atheism intrinsic to dialectical materialism made it impossible for both ideologies to converge, even less to fuse. At most, Marxists might have realized that some Marxist social-ethical goals were not incompatible with the Gospel's message. On its part, the Party claimed that it was not interested in metaphysics, but only in practical collaboration on issues of common social-ethical interests.

If the political purpose of the dialogue on the part of the PCI was to receive legitimation for its program of compromise, and, on the part of the Church, to confront the world in an effort to overcome its own crisis, then it would make sense to try to maintain the dialogue on the cultural level, as a show of recognition of each other's existence, importance, and weight in society. In this sense, the dialogue is a symptom of a crisis in both institutions. But the dialogue introduced an element of further disintegration of the monolithic aspect and cultural hegemony of both institutions over their respective masses.

The dynamics of the dialogue itself resulted in, or at the very least, were accompanied by, a radical critique and political disaffection within each institution on the part of some Marxists and some Catholics respectively, who then went on to form new left parties, new social groups, and radical religious communities. From the beginning, the Party in its search for a dialogue sought out the hierarchy of the

Church and the moderate Catholic organizations. It disregarded, and even now minimizes, the position of dissenting Catholics who questioned the Church as an institution and who, in their newly found Marxism, would similarly question the PCI as an institution. "The Party can't ignore," says a diaspora Catholic

. . . that the religious inspiration to work for the renewal of society in a Socialist sense, is found especially in the Catholic diaspora, and that the Independent Left Catholics have been all severely judged by the Church.⁸

The breakup of the political unity of Catholics and the fragmentation, culturally, structurally, and socially, of the Catholic world since the 1960s might have favored the growth of the PCI electorally. But according to Tarrow, unless Italy undergoes a rapid process of secularization destroying the traditional bases of DC support, the PCI-- despite its attempts at an opening to the Church--will find it difficult to expand into the Catholic electorate.⁹ Certainly, secularization and industrial modernization have been accompanied by changes in religiosity, but not by the disappearance of the Church. Certainly in Italy, the Church, rather than being a victim of Italy's modernization, seems to retain its fundamental strength. For example, in Lombardy and Veneto, among the wealthiest and most industrialized regions, the cultural and economic power of organized Catholicism and of the Church is still enormous. During the May 1985 administrative elections, in Lombardy the DC received

36.1 percent of the vote, and in Veneto, 45.9 percent.

The DC vote has been declining, but so has the PCI vote. The Christian Democrats reached their highest peak (48.5 percent) in 1948. Since then, the vote has been slowly diminishing. It was steady at about 38-39 percent from 1963 to 1979, then it declined. The May 1985 elections gave the DC 34.7 percent of the vote, a mere four percent above the PCI. The Catholic party however, does not seem to disintegrate as a result of the dialogue or of the real mass defection of those Catholics who made a class choice.

There are no quantitative studies of where the Catholic vote has gone. In the years since the historic compromise, however, it has not gone to the PCI: the PCI vote has also been declining. The PCI grew steadily in the 1940s and in the 1950s, at the time of the cold war and of Pius XII's excommunication. From 18.9 percent in 1946, it went to 22.6 percent in 1958. During this time, there does not seem to have been any problem of conscience or of the intellect in those believers who were, at the same time, Communist rank-and-filers. These were the upright citizens, honest family men, industrious workers, anti-clerical but Church-going, example-setting humble citizens of whom Italian early post-war lore is full (see, for example, Giovanni Guareschi's extremely popular Don Camillo books). According to a 1972 poll, to the question "Can a good Catholic be a Communist?" 84.5 percent of PCI members answered "yes." What is even

more indicative in this poll is that 72.6 percent of PSI members and 36.8 percent of DC members also answered "yes." Also, 39.7 of MSI (Neo-Fascist Party) members answered "yes." In 1972, the PCI vote was 27.2 percent.¹⁰

The Party continued to grow during the time of international détente, 1968 movements, and radical organized labor activism. From 25.3 percent in 1963 it grew to 26.9 in 1968 and 27.2 in 1972. There is a dramatic five percent jump in 1975 (32.4 percent) and a further growth (34.4 percent) in 1976. This year, 1976, marks the peak of PCI electoral popularity. Only 4.4 percentage points separated it from the DC. The possibility of the historic compromise became operational at this point.

At the same time that the percentage of votes was rising, however, Party membership was diminishing. From 1,800,000 members in December 1945, 2,330,000 members in January 1948 and 2,500,000 members in 1953, the Party went down to 1,800,000 in 1976 and, as of 1983, it counted 1,675,000 card-carrying members, below the 1945 level. The party's vote, however, is twelve percent higher now than it was in 1946. This can be interpreted as a "secularization" of Communism in Italy. More people may vote PCI because of purely pragmatic reasons, but less people are such committed believers in the Party as to take out a membership card. It is a problem of which Berlinguer is very much aware, as will be further specified in this chapter.

Since 1976 the PCI vote has slowly declined. By 1979 it was down to 31.5 percent. The "Berlinguer effect" (34.5 percent at the 1984 European Parliament elections, just days after Berlinguer's death) has not held. At the May 1985 administrative elections the Party received 30.8 percent of the vote. The loss however is a little greater than a first examination would indicate, since the PCI had been hoping to recoup its losses with votes of the new left party PDUP (Party of Proletarian Unity). This party, founded in the mid-1970s after the expulsion of the Manifesto Group from the PCI, was reabsorbed in December 1984 into the PCI. PDUP had traditionally reaped about 1.5 percent of the vote. The votes to PDUP however, seem to have gone this year to the other new left party DP (Proletarian Democracy), which received 1.5 percent of the vote, half more than it had received in the 1983 elections. PDUP votes as well as, one surmises, PCI votes, went also to the Partito dei Verdi (Green Party) which, formed just four months earlier, received 2.1 percent of the vote at the May 1985 elections.

Thus while the Christian Democrats have been losing votes, so have the Communists. It does not therefore seem plausible to say that the breakup of the political unity of Catholics has resulted in an increased voting strength of the PCI. In some cases, former DC votes have gone to the extreme right, especially in some Southern regions. Movimento Sociale Italiano (Italian Social Movement, the neo-

Fascist party) received two percent of the votes in 1948, when it was just organized; this year, it received 6.3 percent. The one party that has clearly gained since 1976 is the Socialist Party (PSI). In 1976 it had 9.6 percent of the vote. In 1985 it was up to 13.1 percent. These votes, however, could be explained, rather than as DC or PCI former votes, as votes from the PSDI (Social Democrats); PLI (Liberals), and PRI (Republicans); these small parties have been declining in recent years, and they are now part of Socialist Prime Minister Craxi's five-party coalition.

The reverse question, to what extent has the growth of the PCI occurred at the expense of the PSI, has been analyzed by, among others, political sociologists Giacomo Sani, Gianfranco Pasquino and Wolfgang Berner. After 1947, when it received 20.7 percent of the electoral vote, the PSI steadily declined to a low, in 1976, of 9.6 percent. Since then it has been picking up votes. In the 1985 administrative elections it received 13.1 percent of the vote. According to Giacomo Sani¹¹ it would be correct to say that in the years from 1947 to 1976 the growth of the PCI has occurred at the expense of the PSI, but some qualifications are in order. Rather than as a result of competition for the same area of votes, or the PCI's dialogue approach, it seems that the losses ought to be attributed to reasons that are internal to the Socialist Party.

According to Sani and Pasquino since 1944 the PSI

has been characterized by severe structural, organizational and ideological problems. Structurally, it is poorly and loosely organized, there is an inadequate leadership renewal system, and a general mediocrity of party cadres. The party has been the subject of scandals of political patronage, especially during the center-left years (1963-1976). It is rent by ideological heterogeneity and factionalism, thus making its policy generally wavering and unstable.¹² Party factionalism led to three major splits: in 1947, the pro-Western, social-democratic faction led by Giuseppe Saragat split and formed the PSDI. In 1964, many left-wing Socialists who were dissatisfied with the PSI participation in the center-left government left the party and formed the PSIUP or joined the PCI. On each occasion, about one third of the PSI votes were taken.¹³ In 1976, another split occurred when the libertarian and civil rights wing split and helped form the Radical Party. The center-left coalition wore out the PSI organizationally and politically, including the fragmentation of the Party, a deterioration of its image, and the inability to attract its old constituency--the working class, the intelligentsia, and the young--along with the new dynamic sectors of society.¹⁴

Until 1976 however, the primary reason for the PSI decline seems to have been its ideological ambiguity. As Sani says, its position is "neither fish nor fowl, neither fully supportive nor fully opposed to the government." In

the early post-war period the PSI was maximalist and claimed to be just as Marxist-Leninist as the PCI, although it was part of the Socialist International and not of the Soviet-dominated international Communist movement. In 1951, PSI leader Pietro Nenni even received the Stalin peace prize. The party was united by a "pact of unity of action" with the PCI from 1934 to 1956. During the cold war period however, the PSI started shedding its Marxist-Leninist heritage but, unlike the PCI, did not substitute any other vision or grand strategy. In 1962, it accepted Italy's membership in NATO. Generally speaking, the party follows the policies of the Southern European Social Democratic parties and, like them, in the past few years, especially since Bettino Craxi came to power three years ago, has been moving towards a kind of orthodox neo-liberal market economy approach to Italy's economic problems and has been fully supportive of United States government in NATO, Middle East, and nuclear weapons policy.¹⁵ The party's progressive embourgeoisement and its pro-West, pro-capital, pro-USA policies are attracting technocrats, business and middle class vote, especially since their new leader Bettino Craxi seems determined to remove factionalism by simply suppressing it by fiat.

Today the PSI aims, like the other Southern European Socialist parties, to "restructure capitalism," not in a socialist or social-democratic sense, but rather in the sense of recreating the conditions for capital accumulation by

making labor "flexible," i.e. by adapting labor to the changing demands of the market place, with consequent containment of the power of organized labor. James Petras qualifies this policy as "Reaganomics with a Socialist gloss." The PSI fully accepts United States world hegemony, the division of the world into two blocs, the arms buildup, and cuts in social programs. This type of Socialism is then substantially different from pre-World I classical reform Socialism or even post-World War II classical Social Democracy.¹⁶ It is Socialist in name only.

In the 1950s and 1960s it seemed that the political space had shrunk for a party of the type of the PSI. Since the PCI has somewhat converged to the center, the PSI has been preempted. Since the PCI is less radical now, there are two parties occupying the same terrain on the left-right continuum. They compete for the same votes.¹⁷ Understandably then, the PSI has shed its last reformist residues, thus enabling it to acquire the Prime Minister's seat. Certainly for the United States government, Social Democracy is seen as the "lesser evil" for Europe than a Communist rule. Table 8 on the following page lists the electoral results for all Italian parties from 1946 to 1985. Table 9 lists the major political groups in the Italian left, from 1946 to 1984, clearly charting the splits in the Socialist Party.

TABLE 8
ITALIAN ELECTORAL RESULTS, ALL PARTIES
(1946-1985, IN PERCENTAGES)

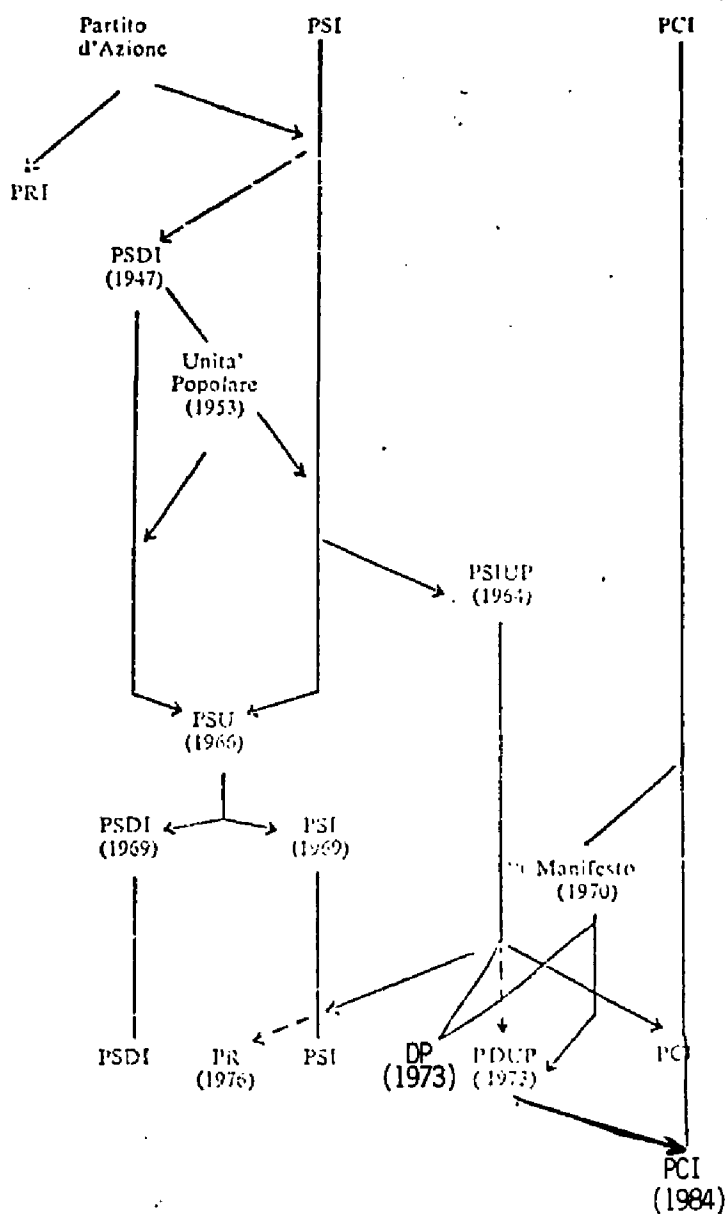
	1946	1948	1953	1958	1963	1968	1972	1975	1976	1979	1980	1983	1984	1985
DC	35.2	48.5	40.1	42.4	38.3	39.1	38.8		38.8	38.3	36.8	32.6	33.0	34.7
PCI	18.9		22.6	22.7	25.3	26.9	27.2	32.4	34.4	31.5	31.5	31.2	34.5	30.8
PSI	20.7	31.0	12.7	14.2	13.8		9.6			10.4	12.7	11.4	11.3	13.1
PSDI		7.1	4.5	4.5	6.1	14.5	5.1				5.0	4.0	3.4	3.5
PRI	4.4	2.5	1.6	1.4	1.4	2.0	2.9				4.0	5.0		4.0
PLI	6.8	3.8	3.0	3.5	7.0	5.8	3.9				2.7	3.0	6.2	2.2
MS-DN										5.7				
MSI		2.0	5.8	4.8	5.1	4.5					5.9	6.6	6.3	6.3
PDUIUM/PNM		2.8	6.9	4.8	1.7	1.3	8.7							
MPL									1.6					
PR										1.3			3.2	
DP										0.8		0.8	1.4	1.5
PDUP									1.6	1.4	1.2			
PSIUP						4.5	1.9							
VERDI														2.1
OTHERS	11.2	2.3	1.7	1.7	1.3	1.4					.4	1.8	.7	1.8

NOTE: Results are for Chamber of Deputies elections, with the exception of 1979 (Senate elections, where only voters 24 years or older can vote); 1980 and 1985 (Regional Administrative Elections), and 1984 (European Parliament Elections)

SOURCES: Howard R. Penniman, ed., *Italy at the Polls, 1979. A Study of the Parliamentary Elections* (Washington, D.C. and London: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1981), pp. 322-323; *La Stampa* (Turin), 14 May 1985.

TABLE 9

MAJOR POLITICAL GROUPS OF THE ITALIAN LEFT
(1946-1976)



Source: Giacomo Sani, "Amici-Nemici: Communists and Socialists in Italy," *Eurocommunism and Eurosoci-alism: The Left Confronts Modernity*, ed. Bernard E. Brown, p. 108, Figure 1, modified. (Reproduced by permission of the publisher).

In this historical conjuncture, twenty years after the beginning of the dialogue, Galli's theory of "imperfect bi-partitism" no longer seems to hold. Although mass political behaviour is still strongly affected by political traditions that have deep roots and survive even "dramatic and far-reaching transformations," the basic political alignment of Italian voters seems to be changing. As mentioned in Chapter VI, the DC and the PCI represent, in the total political spectrum, the right and the left. While the DC vote has remained steady since 1946, the combined left vote (along with PCI and PSI, the other left parties PDUP, DP, PR, Greens) has grown 8.9 percent. While the DC has not been affected, the left in general has gained, although it has lost some of its compactness. The electorate, in general, has moved somewhat to the left, although one must admit that neither the PCI nor the PSI are what they were forty years ago, having both moved closer to the center of the political spectrum. Table 10 below lists the changes in electoral strength.

TABLE 10
DC AND COMBINED LEFT ELECTORAL RESULTS
(1946-1985, IN PERCENTAGES)

Election Year	PCI/PSI	PR/PDUP/DP/Greens	DC
1946	39.6		35.2
1963	39.1		38.3
1979	41.9	3.5	38.3
1985	43.9	3.6	34.7

SOURCE: Compilation from Table 9.

The question of the legitimati on of the PCI as a party that accepts the government and in turn is accepted has now become a moot question. Even the Christian Democrats recognize the legitimacy of the PCI. In his Report to the 1983 XVI Party Congress, Berlinguer quoted DC General Secretary Ciriaco De Mita as

. . . recognizing the legitimacy, nay the necessity of an alternative [with the PCI]. . . . In these statements it is evident that the old ideological prejudices no longer hold . . . that the competition with our party can no longer be conducted like a crusade, but must be developed on the purely political level.¹⁸

Berlinguer went on to quote De Mita, who insisted on the theory of the two "polarisms": "Parliamentary parties," said De Mita, "can be assembled either around the DC or around the PCI."¹⁹ Berlinguer however refused bi-polarism, and went on to reaffirm the Party's desire for another form of

historic compromise, now called by the PCI a "democratic alternative" (as opposed to a "left alternative" with left parties.) While De Mita acknowledges that the country could be governed by a coalition headed by either the PCI or the DC, Berlinguer insists on a co-governance of the Communists and the Christian Democrats.

Alessandro Natta, the current Secretary General of the PCI, in commenting on the slight loss registered at the May 1985 elections, explained it with "the return on the field by the Church . . . which represented an evident indication of Church support for the DC, with explicit forms of collateralism." Natta concluded with an appeal to the "party's necessity of paying renewed attention to the Catholic world."²⁰

The atheism of the PCI, its dependence upon the Soviet Union, its orthodox Marxism-Leninism have been shed. They are no longer obstacles to the legitimation of the Party as a party of government within the on-going political structure. There may be other obstacles, however, to the Party's full participation in governing the country. Maybe, says Luigi Pintor of the Manifesto Group (now back into the Party),

. . . the understanding that has excluded the PCI from government since 1948 will be lifted only when the PCI will no longer express a movement of those classes and groups that do not accept the dominant mode of production.²¹

Insofar as the Party carries genuine revolutionary or even strong reformist claims, "it is 'off-limits' from the government palaces."

Theoretical Conclusions

The Italian Communist Party and the Italian Roman Catholic Church are universalistic movements who focus simultaneously on the same population . Both of these organizations attempt to influence the "soul," or at least the political allegiance, of a common population.

As such, they are subject to similar dynamics with respect to their need for legitimacy, the maintenance and expansion of their respective hegemonies, their vision of political, cultural, and ideological leadership over Italian society. They are also subject to similar dynamics with respect to their receptivity and flexibility to the populations' responses to their initiatives and internal changes.

Assuming there is a relationship between changing social realities and changes in institutional ideologies, the dialogue which was initiated and carried on at the top levels of the hierarchy of both institutions, can be best understood as a symptom of the disintegrating tendencies in the cultural and political hegemony of both institutions.

The extensive industrialization and urbanization of the country gave rise to a modification in the expression of religiosity, with a consequent weakening of the legitimacy, authority and hegemony of the Church. The process of rapid and extensive industrialization that transformed

Italy from an underdeveloped country to one of the seven largest industrial powers in the West, also effected changes in its class composition. These include a drastic reduction in the members of the peasantry, the rise of a white collar, service sector middle class, a relative diminution of the traditional industrial working class, and the mass entrance of women in the labor force. This was a threat to the legitimacy, authority and hegemony of the Party.

Thus in the early 1960s both institutions were faced with new emerging social groups that were the carriers of new needs that could not always be traditionally satisfied. This changing social reality affected the population's perceptions of the roles and goals of traditional institutions. Interestingly enough, since both institutions are the expression of two universalistic movements, the institutions were concerned not only with the new emerging groups, but also with their continued legitimacy with respect to those individuals who were already inside the institutions.

In this sense, the dialogue can be interpreted as a moment of self-validation, of the attempt to develop new modes of consciousness. The social identity of the rank-and-file membership partially shifted. Each institution was intent upon discovering and focusing new public and self-images and respective spheres of hegemony.

At the top level of the Party and the Church the dialogue took place on a strictly intellectual level. None

of them envisaged or welcomed a "fusion" of their ideologies. Of course, that did not happen. Once the dialogue was begun it resulted in "the end of the dialogue," that is, many Catholics made a class choice. The dialogue introduced elements into both ideologies that tended to hasten the disintegration of the respective institutions' hegemony over Italian society. In this sense, the dialogue damaged, rather than aiding, the quest of both organizations towards hegemony.

When both systems of thought are fused as, for example, in the ideology of the Christians for Socialism and of Catholic revolutionaries in Nicaragua, both institutions stand to suffer. The Party loses the legitimation awarded to it by the classical Marxist-Leninist ideology that qualifies the Party as the avantgarde in the consciousness of the working class. The old guard rejects the reformism, ideological slackness, and opportunism. On the other hand, the Church reserves for itself a hegemony over conscience and the supernatural, but may be criticized for a similar expediency.

Since each ideology legitimates the existence, role, and function of each institution, both institutions appear to be aspiring to a reciprocal recognition of the legitimacy to continued existence of both. Under extreme circumstances, they would even be willing to share power, as long as each ideology remained distinct. The threat inherent in the blurring of both ideologies or in the loss of belief in their perfection as Weltanschauungen cannot be overemphasized.

A weakening in the ideology creates a weakening in the legitimacy of the institution among its most devoted believers. Nowhere was this more clear than in the gaps created in traditional Catholic social doctrine, or in the notion of the Church as a juridical and hierarchical body.

Apart from being a tool of reciprocal self-legitimation the dialogue became a tool of political mediation between the two institutions and new emerging groups. A new sensitivity to the role and the importance of individual consciousness was common both to dissenting Catholics and dissenting Communists. This sensitivity was created by both the lack of "clarity" of each movement's ideology and by the fact that the new laboring, service and middle classes had, under pressures of external change, lost their traditional attitudes.

As is generally the case emerging movements, although numerically tiny, can have a qualitative effect that is disproportionate to their number. In our particular case, dissenting Catholics, or the Catholics "of the diaspora" as they identify themselves, played a critical role, aided by dissenting Marxists, in changing the structure of ideology and the self-perception of both institutions, as well as their perception by society at large.

The Church, given, among other factors, its two thousand years of existence and its multi-faceted reality, was more flexible and thus, in the end, more ambiguous, in reacting

to these new needs and claims. While realizing some losses, it was able to maintain intact the core of its ideology, namely its supernatural justification. The Church refuses to blend its theology and social theory with Marxist theory on the basis that Marxism is an immanentist philosophy. It grants to other institutions--at least in principle--the privilege of working for social justice, but reserves for itself the privilege of monopolizing and mediating "supernatural justice."

On the other hand, the Party has been more deeply affected by both the course of the dialogue and the process of social change. It has faced the critiques of dissenting Catholics to the effect that--once Marxism-Leninism was received in a non-dogmatic way--all the existing contradictions with respect to an understanding of religious alienation had to be resolved. In the course of revising its ideology, the Party has attempted a full and complete laicization, i.e. it has attempted to dispense with Marxism as a dogma.

The effects of this secularization on religiosity are not fatal. The Italian situation has revealed, in harmony with Thomas Luckmann's and Max Weber's theories, that the religious sentiment, rather than disappearing, expresses itself in new ways. Thus the Church may no longer count upon its traditional collateral organizations which have been weakened by new class choices. It can count however, on new religious aggregation groups which are pre-political, such as Comunioni

e Liberazione. These groups are important in the Church's strategy of "reconstitution" of the Catholic area.

The effects of this secularization on Communism on the other hand could be fatal. As a Catholic of the diaspora pointed out, there is a kind of "quietistic weakening," of generic anti-ideological reaction that is born and fed in opulent late-capitalist societies. The "end of ideology" is an important issue in contemporary social theory. If we take the Italian example, one determining factor, aside from the dialogue, may be the relative lack of growth of the industrial working class, coupled with a general rise in living standards of this class and of society in general.

For the Party, an ideological "demobilization" can certainly in the final analysis, dilute its capacity for genuine social renewal, lead to the Party's loss of identity and concurrent loss of legitimation.²² In 1963 Togliatti spoke of Communism as "a complete religion of man." A Catholic of the diaspora comments:

The problem is that it has been a religion, but few men exist today who are religious. Thus the crisis is in both the Catholic and the Communist world. . . . This is a dramatic problem: how can one think of a hegemony, as it had been envisioned by Gramsci, without a high ethical project, without this project transversing the subjects of the social? Is it possible to have a non-religious Communism?²³

In this context it then becomes understandable that, while Togliatti was heavily influenced by Franco Rodano as it concerned the Catholic question, Berlinguer was influenced by Rodano and other Catholic-Communists. Berlinguer shortly

before his death had been very sensitive to the arguments of radical theologian Giulio Girardi of the Christians for Socialism. All of Berlinguer's writings and allocutions stress the need for a "moral and ethical reform." There was in Berlinguer an understandable desire to renew the Party in the sense of counteracting the effects of the weakening hold of its ideology. No longer to be found in the traditional working class, a renewed revolutionary spirit could be found in new subjects who are religiously inspired. If the objective conditions that can lead to a revolutionary consciousness are no longer to be found in clearly degrading and oppressive economic and working conditions, since these have visibly diminished in Italy, the revolutionary élan could be maintained in the Party by other groups and individuals whose values converge with those of Communism.

These converging values are a millenarian conception of salvation, a prophetic dimension in the respective messages, a concern for salvation understood historically as an end to social injustice, an escathological dimension, a heightened sense of history and of one's unique place in history's design (whether immanent or transcendent), a preferential option for the poor and the oppressed, and a belief in the importance of a heightened state of awareness as an impulse for praxis in society.²⁴ Girardi's writings all work towards a theoretically valid fusion of both ideologies:

. . . The meeting between revolutionary Christianity and Sandinist Marxism in Nicaragua represents today the most eloquent illustration of this theoretical convergence, of the "total coherence of those who have even shed their blood to make the seeds of liberation germinate (quoting from a Nicaraguan communiqué)". . .

Therefore the hypothesis of two movements who cooperate in practice but start from antagonistic theoretical premises is even less acceptable since in both cases, we are speaking of theories of praxis. . . .

In any case, if any differences remain, they cannot be of fundamental importance. . . . For many revolutionaries, whether they believe or not, what is fundamental is not their relation with God, but their relation with men and with history. . . .

The fundamental contradiction is not the one that pits idealists against materialists, but the one that pits the oppressed against their oppressors.²⁵

If the Party is successful in becoming the magnet for those who, in a renewed Christian consciousness, aspire to work for social justice, then the Party will have succeeded in really delegitimizing the DC as the Catholic party. It may also delegitimize itself among its traditional members. The Italian Communist Party might then become the new Catholic party. Italy could then be governed by the twin rule of the Cross and the Hammer-and-Sickle.

Notes to Chapter VII

1. Oddone, "L'atteggiamento della Chiesa nelle questioni politiche," p. 67.
2. Mondrone, "Coei che salverá l'Italia," p. 14.
3. Berlinguer, "Rapporto e conclusioni," (1983) Partito Comunista Italiano, XVI Congresso Nazionale. Atti, risoluzioni, documenti, p. 36, 37.
4. Max Bemt, "Marketing Eurocommunism: A Conference Report," Telos, no. 37 (Fall 1978), p.122, quoting Peter Lange.
5. Tarrow, "Le parti communiste et la société italienne," p. 3.
6. Tarrow, Communism in Italy and France, eds. Blackmer and Tarrow, p. 591.
7. Ibid., pp. 594-595.
8. Giorgio Jossa, "Novità ed interrogativi sollevati dalla lettera," Il Tetto, no. 86 (March-April 1978), p. 191.
9. Tarrow, Communism in Italy and France, eds. Blackmer and Tarrow, p. 636.
10. Giacomo Sani, "Mass Level Responses to Party Strategy: The Italian Electorate and the Communist Party," Communism in Italy and France, eds. Blackmer and Tarrow, p.483, Table 12.
11. Giacomo Sani, "Amici-Nemici: Communists and Socialists in Italy," Eurocommunism and Eurosocialism: The Left Confronts Modernity, ed. Bernard E. Brown (New York: Cyrco Press, 1979), p. 126.
12. Sani, "Amici-Nemici: Communists and Socialists in Italy," pp. 126-127. Also see Gianfranco Pasquino, "The Italian Socialist Party: An Irreversible Decline?," Italy at the Polls: The Parliamentary Elections of 1976, ed. Penniman, pp. 183-227, especially p. 191. See also Wolfgang Berner, "The Italian Left, 1944-1978: Patterns of Cooperation, Conflict and Compromise," The European Left: Italy, France and Spain, ed. William E. Griffith (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1979), pp. 13-47, especially p. 34.
13. Sani, "Amici-Nemici: Communists and Socialists in Italy," p. 129.

14. Pasquino, "The Italian Socialist Party: An Irreversible Decline?," p. 191.
15. James Petras, "The Rise and Decline of Southern European Socialism," New Left Review, no. 146 (July-August 1984), p. 37.
16. Ibid., pp. 44-45.
17. Sani, "Amici-Nemici: Communists and Socialists in Italy," pp. 127-128.
18. Berlinguer, "Rapporto e conclusioni," (1983) Partito Comunista Italiano, XVI Congresso Nazionale. Atti, risoluzioni, documenti, 1:51.
19. Ibid., 1:52.
20. Alessandro Natta, interview in Il Progresso (New York), 24 May 1985, p. 1.
21. Luigi Pintor, "Sinistra di Governo," L'Espresso, 26 May 1985, p. 9.
22. Piero Bellini, "Un umanesimo alla prova: la questione religiosa nella lettera di Berlinguer a un Vescovo cattolico," pp. 158-161 passim.
23. Giovanni Bianchi, "A vent'anni dalla morte di Palmiro Togliatti," pp. 38-39.
24. Berlinguer, "Rapporto e conclusioni," (1983) Partito Comunista Italiano, XVI Congresso Nazionale. Atti, risoluzioni, documenti, 1:36-40.
25. Girardi, "Il Marxismo di fronte alle esperienze religiose rivoluzionarie," Critica Marxista 21 (1983):156-186 passim. The whole article is very important to understand how a fusion of the two ideologies could operate.

APPENDIX

THE DIALOGUE IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT:
BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW

Like the other European Communist parties, from the 1930s to the mid 1950s the PCI was formally a section of the Comintern and, later, of the Cominform. It accepted those bodies' authority in the determination of its domestic strategy and choice of leadership. The policy of the Comintern and Cominform was largely determined by the Communist Party of the USSR and was aimed at strengthening the international position of the Soviet Union. In the period from 1944 to 1947, Stalin's line was that the wartime alliances of the USSR and the Allies should continue. This would find expression in the collaboration of the national Communist parties with the clients of the Western Allies, at the domestic level.¹ Thus, initially, the "Italian way to Socialism" (which later took the form of the dialogue) was dictated by Soviet interests. The fact however that the policy was part of a Western European strategy and was ultimately decided with the international consolidation of the USSR as a primary goal, does not necessarily mean that the policy was not responsive or not tailored to the Italian situation. Togliatti's analysis and plans for the PCI were,

of course, in harmony with Moscow's policies. One could not otherwise fully understand the determination with which Togliatti pursued the dialogue policy for twenty years, nor could one understand the positive effects the policy had on the Party in terms of its growth and legitimation.

In 1947-1948, when the "moment for a thorough political and social upheaval seemed at hand," the revolution did not occur. Italy, still occupied by the United States army, was not a favorable site for insurrection. In part, this was also because the Communist leadership did not want an insurrection. Soviet interests were clearly opposed to an upsetting of the spheres of influence that had been decided at Yalta. Under the Yalta Agreement, Italy was to be an American and British client state.² In 1948, when the PCI was shut out of government, the Communist Party of the USSR ordered the Party to stage strikes and riots to protest the Marshall Plan and the entrance of Italy into the NATO alliance. This was the beginning of the cold war that affected France as well as Italy. But, according to Tarrow, "Togliatti was slower than Thorez in implementing the widespread riots and strike tactics ordered by the Cominform in 1947-1948."³

The PCI's non-revolutionary policy then had been endorsed and most probably inspired by the Soviets; but its development into what I have called the "dialogue approach" is purely endogenous to the Italian situation. This was due to the peculiar role of the Church and the nature of the

Party under Togliatti's leadership. The dialogue approach developed its own internal dynamics.

Until 1948, the influence of the USSR Communist Party may have been beneficial to Italy. In that critical period, Italy could celebrate its victory over Fascism and social peace. The directives from Moscow may have helped to lay the foundations for those broad alliances that the Party has been pursuing under its dialogue approach. From the more narrow point of view of the workers' movement, the results were negative. At that time, most rank-and-file Communists were more radical than the leadership. Most were armed and ready for revolution. The PCI however had apparently accepted the status quo and, although it maintained a Maximalist rhetoric, was, in practice, conservative. It wished to avoid what would have amounted to a civil war. Therefore, in the estimation of Giorgio Galli, the Party used the presence of the Allies as a pretext for its unwillingness to give the go-ahead to armed conflict.⁴

The Party's ties to Moscow were, as early as 1957, no longer based upon complete subordination. Togliatti had made it clear that the USSR Communist Party was no longer the guiding party for the international movement. "Yet, symbolic and probably financial links were continued."⁵ The link with the Soviet Union was important in legitimating the PCI in the eyes of its most radical rank and file, in making it appear stronger because it was backed by such a formidable

ally. "If the USSR had in fact no serious interest in advancing the cause of revolution outside of its borders, then the PCI's entire past would be suspect and the logic of its continued adherence to Soviet policy would become tenuous indeed."⁶ While developing a domestic way to Socialism, the PCI identified with Soviet foreign policy completely. There was no attempt to develop a specific doctrine analogous to the Italian way to Socialism. Instead, the PCI identified the interests of the international proletariat in the struggle against imperialism, with the overall interests of the Soviet state.⁷ Says Galli: "To disown Moscow would have meant that the PCI would lose prestige, and the Party would have been abandoned by the masses, who were largely then more radical than PCI cadres."⁸

United States interference in Italian politics is of a different nature than the influence the Soviet Communist Party had over the PCI. The United States has not only interfered in party and labor union matters, but has directly intervened in government policy. Observers agree that Italy's independence in terms of formulating its foreign policy is minimal indeed, being tied to the United States and its international interests.⁹

In addition to setting up an expanded system of world trade favorable to United States interests and brandishing economic aid as an instrument of persuasion in foreign policy, the United States government intervened directly in Italian domestic affairs. The objectives were to isolate the left, to secure a friendly and like-minded regime in Rome, and to demobilize the labor

movement. Washington saw the situation in Italy as a microcosm of the developing East-West confrontation. The left, under the leadership of the Communists, had to be defeated.¹⁰

In 1947, pro-U.S.A. Socialists who opposed a unity of action pact with the PCI broke away from the PSI with the help of "secret financing from the United States government. They founded a new anti-Communist organization which later took the name of Italian Social Democratic Party (PSDI)."¹¹ In January 1947, Prime Minister De Gasperi went to Washington. According to some reports, officials of the Truman Administration guaranteed generous aid if the Communists and Socialists were expelled from the government. There is however no documentary evidence for this charge.¹² Italy did receive an initial loan of one hundred million dollars. And in May of 1947, De Gasperi formed a new government excluding the two major left parties. No effort was spared by the United States government to link economic aid to an anti-PCI vote in the minds of the electorate. The United States government spent twenty million dollars on propaganda for the 1948 elections. Apparently, De Gasperi had to give way to strong pressures stemming partly from his own party, but also from the Vatican and from Washington.¹³

Following State Department policy, the Council of International Organizations (CIO) refused a request for aid on the part of the Italian General Workers Confederation (CGIL) in case of a left victory. United States unionists and government officials pressured the conservative and

minority forces in CGIL to split the labor movement and to ostracize the left. In 1949, "United States financing helped to put and keep on their feet the new non-Communist labor confederations CISL (Italian Confederation of Workers' Unions) and UIL (Italian Workers' Union)."¹⁴ A month before the 1948 elections, the United States State Department announced that those Italians who joined the PCI would never be allowed to emigrate to the United States and that all economic aid would be cut off if the left won. United States troops remained on Italian soil until the last day allowed by the peace treaty, and there was a steady flow of official pronouncements about the American willingness to show "resolve and military strength if the left won." This was to avoid a repetition of the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia. Thus it was that Italy came under the United States sphere of influence, at least until the present.

United States intervention was again explicit in January of 1978, just before the government of historic compromise began. The Carter Administration came out against including the PCI in government, and hoped that the Communist vote would decline. In January 1979, the Carter Administration again intervened to warn the DC against accepting the Communist Party into the government, after Berlinguer had pressured the Christian Democrats for direct participation in the cabinet.¹⁵ When this was not granted, Berlinguer withdrew from the majority (January 31, 1979) and the govern-

ment collapsed. Then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who gave the closing speech at a conference on Eurocommunism held in Washington, D.C. in June 1977, spoke of

. . . the cohesion of the industrial democracies of Western Europe, North America and Japan . . . [being] . . . jeopardized by an internal danger, the growth of Communist parties and the danger of their accession to power in some countries.¹⁶

In Italy this growth "is part and parcel of an increasing and dangerous polarization of politics. . . . The Communists," continued Kissinger, "have already achieved a virtual veto power over government programs in the Italian Parliament."¹⁷ Equating Western European Communist parties with the Soviet and Eastern European Communist parties, Kissinger was doubtful that the Western European Communists, once in power, would maintain a democratic parliamentary system: "By the very nature of their beliefs Communists will be driven to bring about institutional changes that would make their ascendancy permanent."¹⁸

The other great fear was that Communist participation in the government would change and diffuse the character of the NATO alliance, weaken its military strength and unity and, ultimately, endanger the existing bloc system, for, said Kissinger, "the Western European Communist parties would steer their policies close to the so-called non-aligned bloc and in an anti-Western direction." Kissinger suggested that "the United States should conduct its policies towards its allies in a way that strengthens the moderate, progressive

and democratic governments of Europe,"¹⁹ by which he meant the Social Democratic parties including, in Italy, the PSI.

The government Italy has had for the past three years, an anti-Communist coalition headed by a Socialist Prime Minister, is seen by the United States as a lesser evil than the historic compromise or a government of the left largely based on the PCI. This would, at least in part, explain the intense consultations that took place between the Socialists, the Christian Democrats and United States government officials before Benito Craxi was appointed Prime Minister. If the ideological, political and religious reasons internal to the Italian state and to Italian society that withheld governmental participation by the Communists have now fallen, the reason for the PCI still being shut out from a government coalition can only be searched outside of Italy. Notably, the exclusion of the Communist Party may be explained by the place Italy occupies within the NATO alliance and within United States military policy. This, however, can be the subject of another dissertation.

Notes to Appendix

1. Blackmer and Tarrow, Communism in Italy and France, p. 42.
2. Blackmer, Unity in Diversity, p. 14.
3. Blackmer and Tarrow, Communism in Italy and France, p. 579.
4. Blackmer, Unity in Diversity, p. 15. See also Galli, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, pp. 238-239.
5. Kogan, A Political History of Post-War Italy, p. 40.
6. Blackmer, Unity in Diversity, p. 206.
7. Ibid., p. 238.
8. Galli, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, pp. 238-239.
9. See, among others, an interview with Socialist Massimo Salvadori, Telos, no. 38 (Winter 1978-1979), pp. 119-124 passim.
10. Joanne Barkan, Visions of Emancipation: The Italian Workers' Movement since 1945 (New York: Praeger, 1984), pp. 25-26.
11. Ibid., p. 26.
12. Ibid., p. 14.
13. Ibid., p. 27, and note no. 11, p. 34. The major documentary source for United States involvement in the internal politics of Italy is found in Roberto Faenza and Marco Fini, Gli Americani in Italia. The book reports and quotes from about 30,000 documents obtained under the revised Freedom of Information Act and collected by the authors in Washington, D.C. with the assistance of the Ralph Nader Center for the Study of Responsive Law and the National Security Studies Center. The documents collected cover the 1943-1950 period and concern the United States strategic agencies (OSS, SSU, CIA, FBI), the United States State Department and the United States Embassy. See in Faenza and Fini the Avvertenza, pp. ix-xv.
14. Barkan, Visions of Emancipation, p. 5. See also Kogan, A Political History of Post-War Italy, pp. 4-7.

15. Kogan, A Political History of Post-War Italy, pp. 124, 131.

16. Henry A. Kissinger, "Communist Parties in Western Europe: Challenge to the West," Eurocommunism: The Italian Case," ed. Austin Ranney and Giovanni Sartori (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy, 1978), pp. 183-184.

17. Ibid., p. 184.

18. Ibid., p. 186.

19. Ibid., pp. 191, 195.

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Adesso, Primo Mazzolari

Adista, religious news service

Astrolabio, Independent Left Parliamentary Group

L'Avvenire d'Italia, Raniero La Valle

Azione Sociale, ACLI weekly

Bozze

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com-nuovi tempi, Giovanni Franzoni, CDB and CPS

Critica Marxista, PCI theoretical journal

Cronache Pastorali, Lorenzo Milani

Cronache Sociali, Giuseppe Dossetti

Dialogo, Umberto Santino

La Discussione

Il Gallo, Nando Fabro, I Galli

Il Giornale dei Lavoratori, ACLI daily

IDOC

IDOC Internazionale

il manifesto, new left daily

L'Osservatore Romano, Vatican daily

Paese Sera, Piero Pratesi, PCI and new left daily

Quaderni Bianchi

Quaderni della Rivista Trimestrale, Franco Rodano

Quaderni di Azione Sociale, ACLI theoretical journal

Quaderni Piacentini, new left theoretical journal

Questitalia, Wladimiro Dorigo

La Rocca

Il Regno

Rinascita, PCI weekly

Rivista Internazionale di Dialogo

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Settegiorni

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Testimonianze

Il Tetto

L'Unità, PCI daily

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Azione Cattolica/Catholic Action
ACLI	Associazioni Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani/ Italian Christian Workers' Associations
AIMC	Associazione Italiana Maestri Cattolici/Italian Catholic Teachers' Association
AO	Autonomia Operaia/Workers' Autonomy
BR	Brigate Rosse/Red Brigades
CDB	Comunit� di Base/Grassroots Communities
CEI	Conferenza Episcopale Italiana/Italian Bishops Conference
CGIL	Confederazione Generale Italiana dei Lavoratori/ Italian General Workers' Confederation
CIF	Centro Italiano Femminile/Italian Women's Center
CISL	Confederazione Italiana dei Sindacati Lavoratori/ Italian Confederation of Workers' Unions
CL	Comunione e Liberazione/Communion and Liberation
COLDIRETTI	Confederazione Italiana Coltivatori Diretti/ Italian Confederation of Farmers
CPS	Cristiani per il Socialismo/Christians for Socialism
DC	Partito della Democrazia Cristiana/Party of Christian Democracy
DP	Democrazia Proletaria/Proletarian Democracy
FIM	Federazione Italiana Metalmeccanici/Italian Metal Workers Federation
FUCI	Federazione Universitari Cattolici Italiani/ Federation of Italian Catholic University Students
LC	Lotta Continua/Continuous Struggle

MLC	Movimento Laureati Cattolici/Catholic University Graduates and Faculty Movement
MPL	Movimento per i Lavoratori/Workers' Movement
MSI-DN	Movimento Sociale Italiano-Destra Nazionale/ Italian Social Movement-National Right
PCI	Partito Comunista Italiano/Italian Communist Party
PDIUM-PNM	Partito Italiano di Unitá Monarchica-Partito Nazionale Monarchico/Italian Monarchic Unity Party-National Monarchic Party
PDUP	Partito di Unitá Proletaria per il Comunismo/Party of Proletarian Unity for Communism
PLI	Partito Liberale Italiano/Italian Liberal Party
PO	Potere Operaio/Workers' Power
PPI	Partito Popolare Italiano/Italian Popular Party
PR	Partito Radicale/Radical Party
PRI	Partito Repubblicano Italiano/Italian Republican Party
PSDI	Partito Social Democratico Italiano/Italian Social Democratic Party
PSI	Partito Socialista Italiano/Italian Socialist Party
PSIUP	Partito Socialista Italiano di Unitá Proletaria/ Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity
PSU	Partiti Socialisti Unificati/Unified Socialist Parties
UIL	Unione Italiana dei Lavoratori/Italian Workers' Union
Verdi	Partito dei Verdi/Green Party

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