

March 30, 1948

Message, Willems to Chamberlin, Ennis

Citation:

"Message, Willems to Chamberlin, Ennis", March 30, 1948, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Msg, Willems to Chamberlin, Ennis, 30 Mar 1948, folder "Italy 1948," Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2 (Intelligence), "Top Secret" Incoming and Outgoing Cables, 1942-52, Record Group 319, National Archives and Records Administration. Obtained by Thomas Boghardt. <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/144998>

Summary:

A memorandum from the US Army's Intelligence Division, detailing the Army's contingency plan in the event of a communist takeover in Italy's 1948 parliamentary elections.

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

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Authority UVD 8 03 002

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PER PARAS 51i and 60a (4), AR 380-5

From: USMILATTACHE AMEMBASSY Rome, Italy sgd Willems

To: CSGID PERSONAL for Chamberlin or Ennis

Nr: MAR 129

30 March 1948

Proposed reaction in event Communists controlled government established Italy per discussion item carried Ennis Frankfurt is subject. Proposal discussed most important officials Rome Mission. Viewed here as possessing extremely grave implications, carrying with it probability plunging Italy into bloody civil war and seriously hazard- ing start World War III.

However as final positive though desperate action to hold Italy for western bloc in event Communist successes, consider proposition cannot be discarded. Therefore recom- mend immediate exploration and development United States proposals for implementation.

Considered here conception this move should not be only military in aspect but should represent resurgence democratic political forces. Hence calls for strong poli- tical figure as leader who, with some assumption govern- mental authority, could call upon all armed force, police, and non-Communists as well as anti-Communist elements. Thus presented believe strong elements police, army, air and navy would support movement. However great dependence would have to be placed on anti-Communist partisan organiza- tions. Leader suggested Ennis memo, while professionally competent, not recommended head movement considering require- ments personality, broad popular appeal and national greatness.

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W. Chamberlin

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From: USMILATTACHE AMEMBASSY Rome, Italy sgd Willems
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While realizing necessity expediting preparations, we are not yet prepared recommend Italian element to be approached nor do we feel approach should be made at this moment. However do concur in suggestion send 1 or more United States representatives Rome for discussions. Would not concur unless representatives can come prepared state details United States assistance and be authorized commit our government on this venture.

End.

NO ACTION REQUIRED
ANSWERED BY SIGNER
ANSWERED BY OTHER
OTHER NOTION
ACTION REPORT SIGNED BY:
<i>Watson - 4913</i>
EXTRACTED BY: <i>me</i>

CROSS REFERENCE			
FROM	TO	PLACE	DATE

ACTION: Gen Chamberlin
INFO : Gen Wedemeyer, Lt Col Bowen, Mr Forrestall, Mr Royall,
CSA

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