

Greek Resistance 1942-1945

Lecture No. 0003 (January 21, 1974)

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Preliminary remarks

Somebody wants to make the announcement.

[*Student*: Tomorrow at twelve noon at the Library Mall there'll be a rally so that we can start to organize, to end the energy freeze, and to tell Nixon that anyone who...] [*inaudible; laughter, applause*].

And at one o'clock... [*laughter*].

Students, for the last time, is there anyone here for the first time today who has registered for the course? If so, raise your hand. Anyone here for the first time today who has registered for the course? Oh, there's somebody back there...

Now, I assume that everyone, then, who was registered for the course has filled out one of the white class cards and submitted it to us, because this weekend we make out the section rolls. So that we should have a complete roster... Anyone else? Last chance or else you're a non-person [*laughter*].

Lecture

Pose, then, the important historical problem of the confrontation between American policymakers toward the end of the Second World War and the possibility of a European social revolution. And from the historical record, which is now rather copious and rather well established, it seems to me that on that problem we can draw certain observations, certain kinds of general observations, which in a sense begin to put that problem in an historical perspective. In the first place, that toward the end of the Second World War — over the last eighteen months, at any rate, of that experience — that British and American authorities together have a growing apprehension, a very deep apprehension, of the possibility that the European left, which already was burgeoning in the resistance movements against Hitlerism and against the puppet governments that the Nazis had established, that there was a possibility that that European left might come to fill a political and social vacuum, which vacuum, after all, would be created by the defeat of the Axis powers.

And the second observation: that American policymakers especially looked upon that possibility as striking a very mortal blow at the schema and the conception of a postwar world that already was being developed among American advisors — that it seemed to strike a very mortal blow, at that schema for a restructured world economy in which there should be an hegemony of the United States over a kind of open-door empire.

And in the third place, and terribly important: that if that was a possibility, and if it struck a mortal blow, American policymakers conceived it as being imperative that they devise and chart a strategy in order to contain that European threat, and actually to defeat and ultimately to crush it.

And the fourth observation: that that determination to make a policy of containment of a social revolution really was rooted in two conceptions, or two observations, or two assumptions that were repeated over and again by American policymakers. The first assumption being that the Communist parties of the resistance movements really had come to dominate those resistance movements, and that those Communist parties were going to use that opportunity in order to launch violent revolutions in order to install Communist societies wherever possible — in order to install, if you please, Soviet-style governments. And the second assumption, that behind that drive of the Communist parties of Europe was the Soviet Union, and that the Soviet Union was using those Communist parties in order to extend its influence — in order, if you please, to communize Europe.

And all of those observations really are replete in the documents; really there is copious evidence for them. And by the end of the Second World War, that fear that somehow there would be a social revolution which would block off that postwar design became almost a paranoia. And if you look at some of the reports — and the writings are very key — of American policymakers at that point, you become terribly aware of how much the world began to seem Manichaeian to them, how much there seemed to be an enemy that really was striking at the very vitals of postwar American prosperity. You get it very decisively in the reports that are very authoritative of Averell Harriman. Averell Harriman was very crucial to this kind of thinking; he was serving toward the end of the Second World War as the American ambassador in the Soviet Union.

But you must remember that Harriman has tremendous clout: that he is, after all, the son of that E. H. Harriman (who was one of the great railroad tycoons of the world), that he is the senior partner of Brown Brothers Harriman, that he is at the very heart of American investment capitalism. And it is Harriman, from his listening post in Moscow, who begins to write very paranoid reports back to the American State Department, like the one in the spring of 1945 in which he said: "The Communist Party and their very fellow-travelers are everywhere using economic difficulties in areas under our responsibility to promote Soviet concepts and policies and to undermine the influence of the Western Allies. We must face up decisively to the

possibility of Soviet domination in Europe." Or if you look into the memoirs of Harry Truman (who was to replace Franklin Roosevelt as president in May of 1945), then in Truman's memoirs, he reports that when he ascended to the presidency, all around him among American advisors and policymakers was a kind of fear that Europe would be communized — out of the chaos, out of the hunger, out of the bad conditions that the Second World War had produced — and that it was necessary decisively to face up to that particular threat.

And, you see, all of that raises in our mind two very important questions. It raises, first of all in our mind, the question of whether that reading of the world on the part of American policymakers conformed to reality, as you can define that reality, again, in the documents and the established historical record. And secondly, if it did not conform to reality, then what was really the mainspring of American conduct? What was it, after all, that generated that kind of Red Scare toward the end of the Second World War and into the period immediately after it? And from that record, again, it seems to me evident that this assumption on the part of policymakers — that the Communist parties were out to make a violent revolution, and that the Russians were behind them really — is quite contrary to reality, that it is either an exaggeration or an error or a myth. And that, fundamentally, if you ask a number of questions about those assumptions, they begin to disintegrate. Consider certain aspects of the problem. Consider, in the first place, the question of what the source of influence of the Communist parties in Europe was at the end of the Second World War, why they had emerged as the leading element in the other resistance. And then what was at the very center? What was the key principle of their tactics? A very important question to pose in terms of the assumptions of American policymakers.

And it is quite true, if you look at the copious evidence that has been produced by that very important Institute on the Study of the History of Resistance Movements — which is located in Paris, and which is headed by Professor Henri Michel, and which has produced literally scores of monographs now on the resistance movements of Europe — and if you read those monographs, it is abundantly clear that the Communist parties in the most conspicuous of those resistance movements were the key party, this is perfectly true.

But it is also abundantly clear that the basis for their strength, the reason that people joined in large numbers these Communist parties of the resistance, is a twofold reason, and neither has to do with that kind of violent revolution or immediate installation of communism which was in the minds of American policymakers. That it is in the first place patriotism which brings people to the Communist parties in the resistance, and that beat is the strongest motivation of all. It is because after June '41, when the Soviet Union joined the war against the Nazis, that after that time the Communists were the most devoted, the most heroic fighters in the struggle against fascism, that they were the ones who were saying, "We must clear our native land of this kind of scourge." And it was that patriotism, after all, that appealed to others. And that they had an organization, which organization could coordinate the struggle of the resistance, and that they

had, after all, a sense of moderation — that they could appeal very broadly, because they said that liberation is our goal, and every other goal must be forestalled for that precise and particular objective — and so it is patriotism, in the first place, that brings peoples into these Communist parties. And the Communist side tells you to do fantastic things in the resistance movement. Their heroism is beyond belief. And obviously, they stand forth as the best of nationalists, as the best of patriots.

And secondly, what it is that brings people to the Communists is a kind of generalized radicalism in these resistance movements. These resistance movements of Europe, even though they're mixed bags — even though there are many factions in them, even though there are moderates as well as radicals, that there are Catholics as well as atheists — even though they are mixed bags in general, they are upper-left; in general, the drift is toward the left. And there is a genuine radicalism in these terms: a kind of broad desire to refurbish the society, that the fight should not have been in vain, that there should be a restructuring of democracy, that there should be a refurbishing of social justice. And, after all, the Communists were the strongest party of the left; they were the ones that have consistently and coherently said they were of the left. And so they were looked upon, if you please, as the best reformist party, the party that would make reform of structure after the resistance movements had been successful. And so there is a building of the cadre, but this doesn't mean that either the leadership or the rank-and-file of the Communist parties were thinking about that kind of seizure of power, which was in the imagery, after all, of Western policymakers.

And if you ask the second part of that question, you see why I can make this assertion. Because what is the central tactical principle in this entire behavior of the Communist parties? The central tactical principle is the united front, and the Communist parties never depart from that principle. It is the idea that there must be a community of all forces that are willing to fight against the occupation or against the puppet governments. And if you have a unity of all forces, if that is your goal, then you cannot be too far in advance of that resistance movement. You cannot go too far. Consider if you please, that the Communist chieftains were always planning, and were always absolutely opposed to *maquis* activity, the activity out in the bush which couldn't be controlled from a center; that in France, it was a Communist leader like Jacques Duclos who looked at the growth of the *maquis* out in the French countryside, and the activities of the *francs-tireurs* under the direction of a Charles Tillon, and said that it is too dangerous — that, after all, it will try to make a revolution that will split the resistance movement, that will split unity.

And why? In part, after all, because the Communists had the experience of the early '30s, when they had been very sectarian and when they had not combined with others to try to forestall fascism. And that had been part of the victory of the Nazi cause in Germany, and they were not about to make that mistake again. But then also, it is because the needs of the Soviet Union were defined by Stalin and defined by Soviet leadership as being a unity of the Allies against the

Germans, that it was the fight against the Axis that was the primary need of the Soviet Union. And everything had to be done to keep that alliance together. Everything had to be done to protect the friendship of the Soviet Union with the Allies, with Great Britain and the United States, so that possibly they would help in the reconstruction of Russia after the war. And all of that was a *sine qua non*. Look: that when Stalin was asked on the 6th of November of 1944, "What is the basis for your principle of approving a movement or a government? On what principle do you decide?" And Stalin said very bluntly, "The only text for our recognition of a government or our support of a movement is: Does it fight against the Germans?" Now, he might have added a second criteria, and that was: Does it support the alliance with the United States and Great Britain? Because that was fundamentally important. What Stalin meant was that if kings were better fighters against the fascists than partisans, he would support kings and not revolutionaries.

And consequently, that was surely the case, as you know, in Yugoslavia. The Yugoslavian case we'll deal with separately, but just let me point out to you that the Yugoslav partisans led by [Josip Broz] Tito, those good Yugoslav Communists did not know what the resistance movement in Europe did: that they built, early, a partisan army, and that army was capable of driving out the enemy by itself and clearing the country by itself. And consequently, by November of 1943, that Yugoslavian movement, those partisans, decided that they would depose the Yugoslavian king. And so it is [Vladimir] Dedijer, the great collaborator of Tito, in his memoirs *The Battle Stalin Lost*, who writes this (and most interestingly so), that you see really what these Communist parties were about when they were following Russia orders. "In the course of 1943," writes Dedijer, "the People's Liberation Army won victories in all parts of Yugoslavia. Hitler failed in his attempt to smash the main partisan forces. In the fourth and fifth offenses, [Nazi collaborationist Draža] Mihailović suffered a resounding defeat. It was clear to friend and foe alike that the partisans were the only real force in the country."

Simultaneously, conditions were ripening for the establishment of a Supreme People's Authority. And so the Anti-Fascist Council holds a meeting on the 30th of November and decides to depose the king [Peter II], and to call itself the government. And listen to the response of the Russians. Moscow learned about the Anti-Fascist Council's decisions, including the decisions to strip the royal government-in-exile of its legitimacy and forbid King Peter to return — after they have been passed, that is, from the message of November 30th, 1943 — and the reaction in Moscow was very sharp. "The Free Yugoslavia radio station got orders not to broadcast the resolution forbidding King Peter to return to Yugoslavia. [Soviet envoy Dmitry] Manuilsky delivered Stalin's message to us personally. 'Stalin,' he said, 'is very angry. He considers this a knife in the back of the Soviet Union, and a blow to the Tehran Decision, and a mortal blow to the alliance with the West.'" And consequently, it was perfectly obvious that there was, in that central strategy of most Communist parties in the resistance movement, the idea of keeping unity in the

struggle against fascism, and not pushing the particular revolutionary goal or revolutionary objective.

Or consider a second aspect of the problem, and terribly important if you think about this assumption, and that is that the timing of most resistance movements in Europe was all wrong: that the timing was non-revolutionary, if you please. That there is only one resistance movement, and that is the Yugoslavian, that started and mounted a movement very early and managed by itself to clear the enemy, and consequently to establish its position inside its country. For the most part, you see, the resistance movements were very small and sporadic. Until the end of 1943, that they refused to try to mount a real movement against the occupier until there was a reasonable chance of success. And that reasonable chance of success meant that there would be Allied armies either on the scene or about to act: in other words, that the resistance movements would become auxiliary, that they would become part of the military struggle against the occupier. But you see, to wait until there's an Allied army is to foreclose your future as a resistance movement. The only way in which a resistance movement could have a suit to power, no matter what its goal, is if it presented to the Allies a *fait accompli*; but if it waited for those Allied armies to come, the Allies in no way would permit it the right to have the military victory or the right to have the political victory. Rather, it would look for the forces of the old order, it would look for conservative governments to set up, and certainly to exclude the more radical elements of the resistance. And the timing from that point of view was surely not revolutionary.

Or consider, finally, a third aspect, to which we will return incessantly, and that is the Russian interest. And the Russians knew that a vacuum was being created in Europe. They knew that there was a vacuum through the defeat of the Axis, but they steadfastly restrained Communist parties from trying to fill that vacuum. Steadfastly, they stayed away from the possibility of revolution in Central or in Western Europe. And if they filled the vacuum in Eastern Europe, if the Russians moved into the Balkans, they did so precisely for strategic reasons. If the Balkan regimes had been non-Communist but friendly to the Russians, they would never have imposed Communist regimes — as they did not do in Finland — but they could not tolerate, quite obviously, crypto-fascist and reactionary regimes that might, after all, be cat's paws against the security of the Soviet Union.

All of which, after all, comes, it seems to me, to a very decisive conclusion: that these assumptions of American policymakers were wrong. But why? And what was the mainstream of American conduct? Why this error of appreciation? Oh, in part, you might say that American policymakers had their ears open to a lot of very reactionary forces in Europe. And that is true: that forces of the old order that felt that their day was up, unless they could persuade American policymakers that there really was a Soviet threat across Europe — that there really was an effort to communize the continent — unless they could persuade the Americans of that, they had no chance to return. But it's something much more profound than that. You see, it seems to me that

what American policymakers were doing when they were talking about the threat of Communist parties, contrary to the evidence, or when they were talking about Soviet behavior in the way they did for the end of the Second World War, that it was something else. It was a kind of shorthand way and effective way of saying that their primary concern was. What their primary interest was was that the world be made available to a free-market economy, that the one thing we're concerned about were American interests, and that the markets of the world cannot be shut off, that that open door empire be maintained.

Look, look at this kind of very convincing evidence of this hypothesis: that when the Americans came to define their position about Eastern Europe — and that is terribly crucial, because in Eastern Europe, after all, you had had terribly reactionary regimes before the Second World War; you had had crypto-fascist regimes, you had had regimes which, after all, were monarchism, landowner-oriented; no way could you restore those regimes after the Second World War, and no way would the Soviet Union have had approved that anti-Soviet governance should be established on their border — yet once [Edward] Stettinius, the Secretary of State, came to formulate American policy towards Eastern Europe in November of 1944, in a report called "United States Interests and Policy in Eastern Europe," he makes a five-point program. And the first one of his program is this: "The right of peoples to choose and maintain for themselves, without act of outside interference, the type of system they desire"; self-determination, in other words. But that, you see, doesn't really tie with the other points: the second point, which says, "Equality of opportunity as against a policy of exclusion in trade and investment," or especially the fifth point, "The protection and the furthering of American economic rights, existing or potential." You see the point [*laughter*]: that contrary to all possible evidence, contrary to all possibility for those regimes in the postwar period, the Americans were still dogged about the idea that Eastern Europe should remain and be in the postwar world a market for the American economy.

Now, they couldn't do that. The Russian armies were there and occupied those territories. But in the West, it was different. In the West, American policymakers were quite right: there was a vacuum developing, and there was a European left. It wasn't a left created by the Communists, it wasn't a left responsive to the Russians in its revolutionary desire; it was a left of people, people who had fought in the resistance and wanted something else. And it was the American interest to fill that vacuum, to forestall that left. And when, after all, they had to do that, they blamed the Russians for creating a crisis which, in fact, the war itself had created.

But let's look at the examples. The Italian example: the Italian example is crucial, because it is the first time that the United States confronts a resistance movement; it is earliest, it is during the war. And in the second place, because the Italian example gives you marvelous evidence of the fact that all the time that American policymakers weren't concerned to foreclose a social change in Western Europe, they were also concerned to beat the British out in terms of the primary

sphere of influence, or the primary dominion in these territories. And then the third place, because out of Italy, after all, comes a model for other areas.

Well, the Italians. And the Italian regime, it should not surprise you, the fascist regime of poor Mussolini — the fascist regime of Mussolini, pretty much finished by 1943. The Italian war effort, pretty much finished by that time. It had been a kind of a miserable effort. You see, Mussolini — a poor man's King Midas: everything he touched turned to dust [*laughter*] — he went to war the 10th of July of 1940, stabbing France in the back when France was staggering. And that was the one victory. With France defeated by the Germans, it was possible for the Italians to occupy southeastern France, and they also occupied the North African colonies of the French. And that's the last of the victories. And then begin to pile up the defeats. And there are the Italians in North Africa, and they are facing the bedraggled remnants of a British Army, and they are driven out of Libya and driven out of Ethiopia. And then they decide, alright, they will invade Greece — you can certainly defeat the Greeks [*laughter*]. And they invade Greece, and are driven over the mountains back into Albania [*laughter*]. And then they send troops up to the Russian front, and they are decimated, half of them are lost in battle. And then, through 1942, the cities of northern Italy, Milano and Torino and Genoa, all of them begin to be bombarded by Allied planes. No, no. 1943 is a year in which the fascists must pay. The 19th of July of 1943, Rome is bombarded for the first time. And simultaneously the Allies invade and occupy Sicily.

And there is the crisis of the regime. And that crisis of the regime came from below. And I tell you that it is very exciting to think of this: that on the 5th of March of 1943, you've got your first massive labor strike in more than twenty years that really opposed a political regime; that they are the workers of the Fiat plant of Turin who go on strike not only for bread, but against the regime. Their strike spreads to the other factories of Torino, it spreads across the north of Italy. And in the wake of that, the political parties — the anti-fascist parties that have been banned, that have been in exile, whose leaders have been silenced — begin to come back into the open: the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the *Popolari* or the Populist Party (now renamed the Christian Democrats), a new party of socialist intellectuals called the Action Party, the Liberal Party, they all begin to appear. They all begin to make their attacks upon the fascist regime. And then, you see, Mussolini will have to be scuttled, and he will have to be scuttled by his own people. You see, they are the rats that are leaving the sinking ship.

And so the conspiracy against Mussolini of July of 1943 has two foci. In the first place, it is that little court camarilla around that little pipsqueak King Victor Emmanuel, who had brought Mussolini to power twenty years earlier, and Victor Emmanuel has with him our great military hero, Marshal Pietro Badoglio. And Badoglio — who, after all, is the strawman of Ethiopia, the man who conquered Ethiopia, and who has all kinds of fascist honors — Badoglio begins to form a kind of plot from the palace to restore power to the king. And then the other focal point of the plot are the fascist leaders themselves — all except Mussolini, of course [*laughter*], the ones

that want to save their skin. There is Dino Grandi, a former prime minister, and there is Galeazzo Ciano, the son-in-law of Mussolini, a former foreign minister. Yes, yes [*laughter*], they're all against Mussolini. And the fascists don't want the overthrow of a fascist regime, they just want a replacement of the Duce.

And so the fascist Grand Council meets on the 24th of July, a ten-hour meeting that day in 1943. And at the end of that horrendous debate, it is decided that the powers of Mussolini will be reduced considerably, and those of the king will be expanded, and the Duce must go the next day, the 25th of July, to see the king. And suddenly, Victor Emmanuel, as if there has been this shot of monkey juice, really begins to act up. And Mussolini comes in not knowing that behind the scenes are all of the police, and consequently comes in and the king says to him, "No, no, we're not reducing your powers — we're stripping you of them [*laughter*]. And consequently, you're dismissed. And Badoglio is the prime minister. And, oh yes, you are under arrest" [*laughter*].

So Mussolini is put under arrest, and suddenly the king assumes power, and suddenly there is another ministry under Pietro Badoglio. And you have the question: after twenty years of fascism, will the people of Italy accept a king who has brought the fascists to power, and a fascist hero in Marshal Badoglio? Well, you know the movies of [Roberto] Rossellini, and they are excellent documents. And you'll know that the streets of Italy at that particular time were swelling with people who were absolutely drowning fascism in their revulsion with that regime, and who were saying that they would have something new. And at that very time, the six anti-fascist parties that had reappeared formed a kind of loose coalition, this time under the leadership of a former prime minister before fascism, Ivanoe Bonomi. And Bonomi, who is himself a conservative, but an anti-fascist, presides over the meeting of the coalition of the six anti-fascist parties.

What chance does Badoglio and the king have? The Americans [*laughter*]. And the idea, after all, is that you surrender to the Americans, that you make an armistice with them, and that somehow they will protect you, and Badoglio plays that game. And there are the forty-five days between the 25th of July and the 3rd of September when the armistice is finally signed. And in those forty-five days are these torturous negotiations. Badoglio had said that he was making torturous negotiations because he wanted to befuddle the Germans; if the Germans thought he was negotiating with the Americans, then they would obviously occupy the country. Nonsense! No sooner, after all, had Mussolini been overthrown that immediately the Germans were crossing the Brenner Pass. And by the time the armistice was signed, they had occupied everything, including Rome, and really had monopolized the peninsula, except for the extreme southern part. No, these negotiations were dragged out because Badoglio wanted protection. He wanted a promise from the Americans: that the landing that they made from Sicily in Italy would be a landing, not at Salerno in the extreme south, but it would be a landing north of Rome. And if

it were a landing north of Rome, it would save Rome, and it would cut the peninsula in two, and it would really establish the authority of Badoglio and the king. Well, the Americans weren't playing. Strangely enough, Pietro Badoglio made their strategy for them, and consequently they refused to make any promises. Finally, Badoglio signed the armistice on the 3rd of September. On the 7th of September, the Americans did make their landing in Italy, but it was a landing in the south, south of Naples, in Salerno.

And of course, the king, Badoglio, and their little retinue had to flee to the south, because everything in the north and center was occupied by the Germans. They fled to Brindisi in the southeast, finally made their way to Salerno, and there is no government in Rome until the 4th of June of 1944. Now, the question that we asked: How did the British and the Americans look at this kind of regime? Churchill loved it [*laughter*]. Churchill had a great affection for kings — he had that affection — and queens [*laughter*]. He had that affection, quite obviously, in Greece, and he fought like hell to preserve the Greek monarchy. He had it in Italy. Somehow, Churchill is one of those very classic conservatives for whom a monarch means stability. And of course, Badoglio — even though he had been a fascist, after all, he was conservative — he has certainly ingratiated himself to the British. But the Americans had a very empirical approach.

Roosevelt, you see, is a very pragmatic guy. And consequently, FDR writes to Churchill on the 30th of July of 1943, and he says, "You know, I am being hassled here by liberals who say that we should not support a king who had been behind fascism, we should not support Badoglio." And FDR writes to Churchill, "But we must treat with any person or persons in Italy who can best give us, first of all, disarmament, and secondly, assurance against chaos." And so there was no question but that the Americans would support this particular regime so long as it provided a certain social protection. But here is the problem: the problem is that nobody in Italy was supporting the regime [*laughter*], that the masses were opposed to it. And even this coalition of political parties, which had spokesmen like Carlo Sforza, who was sufficiently conservative — I point out to you, so that he lectured in this university in 1943 [*laughter*] — and consequently, Carlo Sforza, or Benedetto Croce, people who were basically just liberals, this council of political parties simply refused to have anything to do either with the king or with this primordial government. And suddenly there is the problem. And the problem is that the regime is not fulfilling the function it's supposed to fulfill.

And while it is empowered, or while the Anglo-American force is protected, something else is developing in Italy. And here is the confrontation. What else is developing is a resistance movement, and the resistance movement in Italy became very large, and the problems that it posed are very fundamental. And quite obviously, that resistance movement was not in the south in Italy. In the south of Italy, there was already the American and the British occupation, and where the Americans were, there was not permitted to be any political activity. Eisenhower's directive of July of 1943, when the Americans landed in Sicily, is as follows: "No political

activity whatsoever shall be countenanced during the period of military government." But the problem is this: the Americans had the view that they didn't like the king or Badoglio, because they simply could not keep social peace, that they weren't fulfilling the role that was assigned to them. But they follow this law, that they would support the king and they would support Badoglio's government until there was Allied occupation of Rome, and when Rome was occupied, which they assumed would be rather quickly, then they would replace this particular regime with something much more viable.

Because, you see, the Americans always had this policy of greater flexibility than the British: they were perfectly willing to talk in the Far East, for example, to nationalist movements, they were willing to talk to anyone that would serve American interests. They weren't so committed to a certain form of conservative action. And so the idea was to simply scuttle this regime once the Allied forces occupied Rome. But Rome, you see, was not occupied by the Allies until the 4th of June of 1944. It's a very long and tedious struggle, the struggle in Italy — you go up that mountainous peninsula after all, and there is terrific hand-to-hand combat everywhere, and Rome isn't taken until June of '44. And the resistance grows. And where the Allied forces are, there aren't politics. But everywhere north of that line, the resistance develops. You see, the Allies didn't get to the line of Florence and Pisa in central Italy until August of '44. And by April of 1945, they hadn't advanced much beyond that line. And consequently, everywhere north of Florence is a fantastic flowering of a popular movement.

They are the partisan groups. Those armed partisan bands that really are committed to certain political parties, organized by the Communists, by the socialists, sometimes by the Action Party, sometimes by the Christian Democrats. And then there are these committees of liberation, committees to try to bring a certain amount of common strategy among the different parts of the resistance movement, and that movement grows. And by March 1945, I should point out to you that there were strikes fermented by the resistance movement in the north of Italy that involved about a million workers, and that the Office of Strategic Services of the United States estimated in that same March of 1945 that there were 182,000 armed partisans in northern Italy, and that they had a potential recruitment of 500,000 more. It was a revolutionary threat. Or was it? You see, this resistance movement in Italy wasn't very clear cut: that there were many parts to the resistance movement, that the Communists, to be sure, controls what are called the Garibaldi Brigades — and the Garibaldi Brigades probably consumed two-fifths of the man power of the armed partisans — but the Communists themselves were very moderate, and were not pushing a revolutionary line. And finally, by the spring of 1944, was organized underground in the city of Milan the CLN, the Committee of National Liberation of Northern Italy. And this was a coalition, and the CLN didn't have an overall ideology; it just had daily tactics to fight against the enemy. There was the possibility, you see, that the resistance movement was not really revolutionary. But that's not the way it appeared to the Americans.

To the Americans, the idea that there was a resistance movement — even if it was fighting against the fascists, that had weapons that really was under the auspices of the Communists — constituted a terrific threat. And so the Americans decided, first of all, at the beginning of January of 1944, that they could solve two problems. And they could solve those problems at once. And that is that they get rid of this kind of resistance movement, or that they could begin to tap it and control it by changing the government in the south of Italy; in other words, by replacing the king and the Badoglio government. And they can accomplish, in the second place, an undercutting of the British influence, because the British had a big influence over the king, and over Badoglio, and it was playing this double game all at once. And in January of '44, the American State Department had more or less decided that Pietro Badoglio, even if he had been the hero of Ethiopia, really had to go. And at that point, Churchill begins to fight back ineffectively, and suddenly the king and Churchill and Badoglio all received an unexpected ally. And the unexpected ally? The Russians [*laughter, murmurs*].

And in March of 1944, all of a sudden the Russians recognized the Badoglio regime and exchanged ambassadors with it. And [Soviet ambassador Andrei] Gromyko, on the 19th of March of 1944, handed a note to Hull in which he explained what the Russian position was. And the Russian position was that what was crucially important was a united front in the struggle against fascism. And if Italy had now joined the war against the Nazis, then there had to be a very broad front of Italian support in that struggle, and that, therefore, that loose coalition of anti-fascist political parties in the south had to come to terms with the Badoglio government. There had to be a united front, and for that reason the Russians were recognizing this government. And they had a way of implementing their policy, because on the 26th of March of 1944, Stalin sent back into Italy the leader of the Italian Communist movement: the man who had been in exile for over two decades, Palmiro Togliatti.

And I went to Togliatti's funeral, and it really was impressive, all along the Via Cavour, leading to the church where there was to be the sermon for Togliatti — made by Luigi Longo, of course, his successor — and all the way along the Via Cavour, there were literally hundreds of thousands of people; it was estimated that two million people lined the way as this cortege, as this funeral procession passed. And I made my way, sort of, to the front, because I had a friend who was then an editor of a Communist periodical in Italy, [Giulio] Quercini, and he put me in the front line there. And so I stood and I watched all this as it went by, and as the hearse went by, obviously, you had all of these magnificent clenched fists. It was really nice to see all those clenched fists in this great cortege. But as the hearse went directly by, many of those clenched fists — and you understood what Togliatti was about — many of those clenched fists that had been that way, at the very last moment, did that [*laughter, murmurs*]. You learned something, really, about what it means to have the subtlety of Machiavellian Communist, as Togliatti did [*laughter*].

So he was sent back, obviously, with a mission. You see, Stalin didn't care what happened to his Communists when they went back, unless they were supposed to do a particular mission. You know, there's a marvelous, marvelous section into De Gaulle's memoirs, when De Gaulle was up in Moscow in November of 1944. And you know, De Gaulle wasn't exactly Peter Pan [*laughter*]; he was, after all, a pretty tough-minded guy. And consequently, he was standing there with Stalin, and suddenly Stalin said something to him. And it really shocked even him, which it took something to do. And Stalin said, "Oh, by the way" — this was November of '44 — he said, "I'm sending back Thorez to France." And [Maurice] Thorez had been the leader of the French Communist Party, had been up there in Moscow in the war years, not taking care of the resistance inside France, but sitting in the Lux Hotel in Moscow. And he said, "I'm sending Thorez back," and then, says De Gaulle in his memoir, suddenly Stalin fell silent for a second, and then he threw back his head and roared uproariously, thought it was just the funniest thing — he said, "Well, I guess you'll shoot him, won't you?" [*laughter, murmurs*].

So when Togliatti comes back in March of 1944, quite obviously, he's going back with a very concrete mission. And the mission was revealed on the first of April of 1944 in the city of Naples, when Togliatti addressed a party conference, a Communist Party conference, in which he said that the Communist Party in this coalition of the six anti-fascist parties must work immediately for collaboration with the Badoglio government, that it must forestall the question or the issue of the king and whether the king should be removed, that everything must be subordinated to this united front. And so the Communists take that particular line, and by the 21st of April of 1944, there are actually members of this coalition of six anti-fascist parties that entered the Badoglio government. And the king makes only one concession, and that is that when the Allies reach Rome, he will advocate in favor of his son Umberto. So that in a sense, the American position of changing the government at that time was undercut. But in a sense, they should have felt secure: they should have realized that revolution was not on the mind, either of the Russians or of the Italian Communist parties.

But then, you see, if you're an American policymaker, you don't think that way. You look up at those partisan bands in the north of Italy, you look at those weapons, you look at the fact that the Socialist Party of Italy under Pietro Nenni and the Action Party, that they were under Moscow's orders — and they were talking about a socialist republic, and they were talking about workers councils and about the immediate and great structural reforms. No, no; no, no. There is a danger and the need for a strategy. And the strategy comes empirically in three stages, and it's pretty sophisticated, and it is a model. And it is, in the first place, the strategy of AMGOT, or Allied Military Government. Wherever the Allies moved in the peninsula of Italy, they established the authority of AMGOT, or of Allied Military Government. And Allied Military Government immediately fought back any kind of radical political activity: it forbade meetings, it censored periodicals, it arrested militants, it simply curtailed the kind of political activity in that area, which might have been a radical political form.

And in the second place, the Americans move very swiftly to get a government favorable to their interests in the south, and ultimately installed in Rome, after Rome had been occupied in June of '44. And here you get this kind of stiletto at the jugular with the British. And where the British are, you see, they suddenly find that the position that they have had about a postwar world is really being undercut. Now, you see, Italy — and the British have this great affection for Italy, just as they have a great affection for Greece: there are historic ties, all the poets went to those places and wrote magnificent poems about them; they're obviously British [*laughter*] — and consequently, in any kind of postwar world, thinks Churchill, if there is an economic bloc that the British can set up, Italy has to be part of that. No, no; no, no. No, the Americans aren't thinking that way. And consequently, once Rome is occupied and the king abdicates in favor of his son Umberto, the Americans move in very, very bluntly, and they say, "Badoglio has gone far enough. And consequently, we remove him from power." And consequently, it was the American force that put in a government under Bonomi, that very conservative leader of this coalition of anti-fascist parties. And then, you see, the Americans show with what instrumentality they could control a society.

Because once the Bonomi government was formed in June of 1944, the Americans began to send in relief and aid. Throughout 1944, for example, the Americans provided whatever relief credits there were. By September of 1944, just a year after Italy has signed the armistice, the United States extended to the Bonomi government credits of \$100 million. And over the winter of 1944 and '45, there were economic missions that came from Italy, and that promise that there would be close collaboration between Italy and the United States in return for these credits. And then the State Department put it in a magnificent policy statement, and listen to this — this is December of 1944, and it really is directed precisely at Churchill and that idea that there are spheres of influence that the British really should be able to claim — and listen to this closely: "The United States does not accept the theory of economic and political spheres of influence, but for geographic reasons this country's interest in Italy may not be as great as that of certain other powers. It has, nonetheless, very real interests in trade, in the protection of American property and investments, and in ensuring that Italy becomes a positive force for peace and cooperation in the postwar world." You couldn't be quite plainer and clearer than that.

All of which leads to the final part of a strategy, and that is to face directly up to the resistance movement in the north itself. And I want you to try to extend your imagination here for a minute. You see what these partisans had done. And if you like film documents, go back and look at those early films of Roberto Rossellini, because nobody documents what that resistance in the north of Italy was better than those early films like *Rome, Open City*. And these were people, you see, who had had a certain exhilaration in the resistance movement — it's very much the same as in France — they are people who have decided that all of that age-long exploitation that you go through in a society, that that can be over. There is a great hope that grows in a resistance movement, you see. And when the Allied armies invaded and came up the peninsula, they were

greeted, if you please, as liberators. And this is, of course, the irony of the entire history: that there were, as these Allied armies moved, there were partisans with red flags in one hand and with guns in the other that really were shouting words of greeting to American troops, who were, after all, liberating their country. And when the Americans arrived, the military government immediately insisted that the partisans give up their weapons. And when they refused, or if they refused, the leaders might be imprisoned, might be jailed and put aside. And consequently, the problem, after all, of a relationship to a movement that was fighting against the Nazis, that was an ally, was a thoroughly ideological and political relationship.

And then the Americans did something that really was rather dastardly. And that is that for logistical reasons, the Allied forces decided to stop in Italy as they got toward the winter of '44 and '45. They hadn't got much further than the Florence-Pisa line, they decided that they had to concentrate on the French Front, on the Western Front, and consequently, they decided that over the winter, there would be no real activity militarily in the north of Italy. But what they did was to broadcast publicly to the Italian resistance in the north, they broadcast publicly to the resistance the fact that there would be no great large-scale military operations, that they would not send weaponry to that resistance movement because of that. And consequently, that gave the Germans in the north of Italy a kind of open way, not only to make open war against the partisans, not only to hunt them out, but to feel perfectly confident that they wouldn't have to confront an Allied Force or Allied weaponry.

In other words, between the 13th of November of 1944, when the Allies announced to the resistance that they were not to make large-scale military activity in the north over that winter, until the 7th of December of 1944, when the so-called Protocols of Rome were signed, there was a terrible Nazi open season or open front on the resistance movement in the north. And finally, the CNL, the Committee of National Liberation, more or less capitulates. They went down with a delegation to Rome on the 7th of December of 1944, and it's on the so-called Protocols of Rome. And the Protocols of Rome were simply a *quid pro quo* that the Allies would now send military supply, and they would send food, and they would send equipment to the resistance of the north, in return for which the resistance promised that they would obey all orders of military government and simply turn over all space that they had conquered to military government — all of which meant that the revolution was forestalled on paper.

And there's one final chapter. And that is that at the very end in April of 1945, when the movement really began again, and when it was the last push against the Germans — note it well, there were the Italians that finally, by themselves, by their own partisan movement, drive out the Nazis. And there is a call for a great insurrection on the 16th of April of 1945 that comes from Milan, that comes from the Committee of National Liberation. And it is answered on the 24th of April in the city of Milan: 60,000 workers rise up in a great general strike, take over the factories, pass them over to workers' councils. In the city of Torino, there is a bitter hand-to-hand

fight between the workers of that workers' city and the Nazis, and the workers drive out the Nazis. And finally, the resistance is in control of the apparatus in all of northern Italy, and there are liberation committees everywhere. And between April and June of 1945, those liberation committees actually execute some 20,000 fascists and collaborators. And then, when the Allied forces get to the north by June of 1945 at the end of the war, the liberation movement, the partisan movement, lays down its weapons and turns the territory over to military government.

And it is really is a question of why, it is not — so very difficult. In the most immediate sense, of course, the Communist Party served law and order in Italy. The Communist Party was hellbent on keeping that kind of alliance of the wartime and not disrupting what the Russian diplomatic game was. And so the Communist Party in part is responsible. More than that, after all, the Americans had decided that Italy would not go to the left, and there was nothing that could be done. It was really a *fait accompli*. And in the third place, anybody that had any other idea could look across at Greece. And when the Greeks resisted, they saw what kind of force came down on their hands. But the rest of the story is, as you know, by 1945, the Americans were really in military occupation of Italy. The resistance was pretty much dead. And what the Americans had on their side in order to stabilize conditions — in a country where you couldn't tell what people might do if they were hungry — what the Americans had on their side was economic power.

Herbert Hoover, you see, had gone down to Washington in May of 1945 — an old wise man, they said, somebody who had known how to use food in World War I to kill off radicalism — and he went down and talked to Secretary [of War] Henry Stimson, and he said, "You know, the United States should never funnel food supply and relief supply through that damnable international organization UNRRA, the United Nations Organization for Relief and Rehabilitation, but it should do it through its own military occupation and government." And Stimson was in perfect agreement. He knew that UNRRA, after all, would distribute aid according to need, and that East European countries, even Yugoslavia, would consequently get that support. And consequently, it was aid that would be given to Italy. And Italy — whose gross national product was down in 1945 by a half, whose food supply was down by a half, which had from June of 1945 until December a left-wing coalition government under Ferruccio Parri — and the Americans maneuvered behind the scenes, and they said, "Well, you will never get proper aid unless there is a stable government in Italy." And you see, that nice phony ham, Alcide De Gasperi, and the Christian Democrats and all those names — [Konrad] Adenauer and De Gasperi and [Georges] Bidault, and all of those damnable Christian Democrats running all over Europe in that period — well, they were installed in Italy. And the miracle of Italy, as we call it, began.

But it's a rather sad story, and very, very much a paradigm, because what happens in Italy will be reproduced over and over again. And it really tells you something about the empiricism of American policy. But there's something I want you to think about over this weekend. And that is that if there is, after all, in Communist policy, a certain *raison d'état* of the Soviet Union — if

they deserted the revolutionary movement, if the Americans were determined that Italy or any other part of Europe, if they could help it, was going to be part of this open-door empire — I want you to think of what it must have been like toward the very end of that war, when there was the thought in these collective resistance movements that things could be different. And I know people in France of my generation, or my close comrades, who have never been the same since, and who have lived from the time that the reality was perfectly clear that those resistance movements would come to null, who have lived like empty shells. There's a lot of hope that goes down the drain for the sake of the strategy of American prosperity. [*applause*]