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GROUP 1
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COUNTRY: ITALY

DOI: 1968 TO JANUARY 1971

SUBJECT: THE NATIONAL FRONT: AN INEFFECTUAL RIGHT WING ORGANIZATION OFTEN ACCUSED OF PLANNING A COUP D'ETAT

ACQ: C J (6 FEBRUARY 1971) FIELD NO. OIR-44838

SOURCE: C J THE REPORT CONTAINS THE CONSIDERED JUDGMENT OF C J AND WAS PREPARED FOR THE USE OF THE INTERIOR MINISTRY AND FOR DISTRIBUTION TO OTHER BRANCHES OF THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT.

SUMMARY: THE NATIONAL FRONT (FRONTE NAZIONALE - FN) IS A RIGHT WING ORGANIZATION WHICH BANDS TOGETHER A LIMITED NUMBER OF MEMBERS MOST OF WHOM COME FROM VETERAN AND ARMED FORCES ASSOCIATIONS. PURPOSE OF THIS ORGANIZATION IS TO PREVENT THE "NATIONAL DRIFT TO THE LEFT", IF NECESSARY THROUGH A COUP D'ETAT. THE FN IS THE CREATURE OF FORMER FASCIST ITALIAN SOCIAL REPUBLIC (RSI) NOTABLE JUNIO VALERIO B O R G H E S E. THE FN, WITH ITS RESTRICTED FOLLOWING AND LIMITED FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND THE COMIC OPERA STATURE

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

- EXEMPTIONS Section 3(b)
- (2)(A) Privacy
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OF ITS LEADER, LACKS THE POTENTIAL TO PLAN AND CARRY THROUGH A COUP. END OF SUMMARY.

1. THE NATIONAL FRONT WAS SET UP IN SEPTEMBER 1968 BY BORGHESE IN AN ATTEMPT TO BAND TOGETHER DISSIDENT ITALIAN SOCIAL MOVEMENT (MSI) MEMBERS, VETERAN GROUPS AND ASSOCIATIONS AND RIGHT WING CULTURAL AND POLITICAL CLUBS INTO A BROAD POLITICAL MOVEMENT CAPABLE OF PREVENTING THE "NATIONAL DRIFT TO THE LEFT." THE FN SEES THE PRESENT POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM AS THE ROOT OF ALL THE ILLS OF THE COUNTRY; IT OPPOSES THE EXERCISE OF POLITICAL POWER BY THE EXTREME LEFT AND BY LEFTIST CATHOLICS AND SOCIALISTS; AND FAVORS THE CREATION OF A STRONG STATE CAPABLE OF GUARANTEEING PUBLIC ORDER, NATIONAL PRESTIGE AND THE FREEDOM OF THE CITIZENS. TO PROMOTE THIS INITIATIVE, BORGHESE ORGANIZED GATHERINGS OF VETERANS AND MILITARY ASSOCIATIONS IN VARIOUS ITALIAN CITIES. HE ALSO SOUGHT FINANCIAL BACKING FROM NORTHERN INDUSTRIALISTS, BUT WITH MODEST RESULTS. THE PAUCITY OF SUCCESS IS ALSO DUE TO THE FACT THAT THE NEW ORDER (ORDINE NUOVO - ON) GROUP, WHICH WAS SUPPOSED TO PROSELYTIZE AND PROVIDE THE ORGANIZATIONAL JUMP OFF POINT FOR FN, HAS REJOINED THE MSI. ONLY SOME 200 "ORDINE NUOVO" MEMBERS REMAINED WITH BORGHESE. THE SUM OF FN ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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IS REPRESENTED BY THE APPOINTMENT OF REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL DELEGATES REPRESENTING HANDFULS OF SUPPORTERS IN ANCONA, BARI, BIELLA, CATANZARO, COMO, GENOA, FLORENCE, LA SPEZIA, LUCCA, MASSA CARRARA, MATERA, NAPOLI, PALERMO, PARMA, PERUGIA, PISA, REGGIO CALABRIA, SASSARI, TERNI, TURIN, TRIVISO, VENICE, VERCELLI, VERONA AND VICENZA. THESE NUCLEI ORGANIZE GATHERINGS, STREET DEMONSTRATIONS AND DISTRIBUTE HANDBILLS. RECENTLY THE MOST ACTIVE GROUP HAS BEEN THAT OF REGGIO CALABRIA, WHICH HAS TAKEN PART IN THE LOCAL VIOLENCE TOGETHER WITH THE REGGIO CHAPTERS OF NATIONAL VANGUARD (AVANGUARDIA NAZIONALE) AND OF "ON." IN SPITE OF ITS LIMITED FOLLOWING AND FAILURE TO EXPAND, THE FN HAS OFTEN BEEN CHARGED WITH PLOTTING A COUP D'ETAT. THESE CHARGES ORIGINATE WITH LEFT WING CIRCLES INTERESTED IN CREATING ALARMIST SITUATIONS TO KEEP ITS RANK AND FILE COMPACT. IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT RIGHT WING CIRCLES TEND TO ENCOURAGE SUCH RUMORS TO ENHANCE THEIR PROWESS AND PRESTIGE. THE RECURRING CHARGES OF FN COUP PLOTTING ARE BASED ON THE ALLEGED ABILITY OF FN TO INFLUENCE THE ARMED FORCES AND THE POLICE AND ON THE PRESUMED PRESTIGE THAT BORGHESE ENJOYS IN ITALIAN MILITARY CIRCLES. BORGHESE DOES NOT ATTEMPT TO DISCREDIT THESE CHARGES; IN FACT, IN HIS SPEECHES AND IN THE HANDBILLS DISTRIBUTED

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BY FN, HE MAKES MUCH OF THE EXPLOSIVENESS OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION AND BOASTS OF THE NON-EXISTING SUPPORT FROM CENTER-RIGHT POLITICAL PERSONALITIES AND VETERANS AND ARMED FORCES ASSOCIATIONS. WITHIN HIS ORGANIZATION, BORGHESE TAKES INITIATIVES AND POSTURES THAT SEEM TO CONFIRM HIS ROLE IN COUP PLOTTING. THIS, IN TURN, PLAYS INTO THE HAND OF THE LEFT WING WHICH POINTS TO THESE INITIATIVES AND POSTURING AS REAL AND DANGEROUS ATTEMPTS AGAINST THE DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.

2. IN SPEAKING TO CLOSE COLLEAGUES, BORGHESE STRESSES THE NEED FOR AN AUTHORITARIAN SOLUTION TO THE PERMANENT POLITICAL CRISIS AFFECTING THE NATION. ACCORDING TO SOME OF THESE COLLEAGUES, DURING MAY AND JUNE 1970, BORGHESE DID HOLD MEETINGS OF FN LEADERS TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITY OF A COUP D'ETAT. THESE MEETINGS WERE PLANNED BY RENO ~~ORLANDINI~~, BORGHESE'S MOST TRUSTED COLLABORATOR AND FN FRONTE NATIONALE "CHIEF OF GENERAL STAFF" ALSO KNOWN AS MAJOR ORLANDINI IN THE ROME RIGHT WING CIRCLES. ORLANDINI IS A FORMER ARMY SERGEANT

Italy Rome
cit: Italy

WHO, DURING THE ETHIOPIAN WAR, SERVED AS SQUAD CHIEF IN THE FASCIST MILITIA; LATER FOUGHT ON THE GREEK-ALBANIAN FRONT AND WAS COMMISSIONED ON THE FIELD IN 1943. AFTER THE 8 SEPTEMBER 1943 ITALIAN ARMISTICE, HE JOINED THE NATIONAL REPUBLICAN GUARD

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OF THE RSI REACHING THE GRADE OF MAJOR. DURING THE ABOVE-MENTIONED FN MEETINGS, FANTASTIC COUP PLANS WERE DISCUSSED, GOING SO FAR AS CHOOSING THE FN LEADERS WHO WERE TO TAKE OVER GOVERNMENT POSTS FOLLOWING A PROCLAMATION TO THE COUNTRY BY MAJOR ORLANDINI. THE COMIC

OPERA ASPECTS OF THESE SESSIONS DISENCHANTED MANY OF THE SUPPORTERS, WHO LEFT THE FN. THE PLOTTERS' FINAL SESSION TOOK PLACE IN A ROME RESTAURANT WHERE, FLUSHED WITH THE EFFECT OF WINE, THE CONSPIRATORS CLOSED DOORS AND WINDOWS AND SANG THE FASCIST NATIONAL HYMN "GIOVINEZZA."

3. AT PRESENT BORGHESE CLAIMS THAT HE HAS REORGANIZED THE FN GENERAL STAFF, BUT HE HAS NO BETTER ORGANIZATION NOR ANY MORE FOLLOWERS THAN PREVIOUSLY. HE STILL KEEPS POSTURING AND MAKING PARADOXICAL DECLARATIONS WHICH REPEL THOSE TO WHOM HE IS TRYING TO APPEAL. SUCH POSTURING IS BEST ILLUSTRATED BY HIS TURNING DOWN THE MSI INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN ITS NATIONAL CONGRESS IN DECEMBER 1970. IN AN ARROGANT STATEMENT, BORGHESE SAID THAT THIS WAS NOT THE TIME TO DILLY DALLY WITH STERILE CONGRESSES, BUT WAS THE "MOMENT FOR ACTION." HE HOLDS TO THIS LINE EVEN IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS, CONVINCED THAT THE COMMUNIST ENTRY INTO THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT IS IMMINENT, CLAIMING ALSO THE EXISTENCE

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OF A SECRET AGREEMENT ON THIS MATTER BETWEEN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY SECRETARY ARNALDO F O R L A N I AND ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) SECRETARY GENERAL LUIGI L O N G O. BORGHESE TELLS HIS FRIENDS THAT, DURING PRESIDENT NIXON'S LAST VISIT TO ITALY, HE MET WITH MEMBERS

OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ENTOURAGE TO WHOM HE ILLUSTRATED THE GRAVITY OF THE ITALIAN SITUATION, POINTING OUT THAT A COUP D'ETAT COULD PROVIDE THE ONLY SOLUTION, AND ASKED U.S. SUPPORT. THE U.S. POLITICIANS ARE ALLEGED TO HAVE REPLIED: "GET MOVING, AND ONCE YOU HAVE TAKEN OVER THE COUNTRY, WE WILL SUPPORT YOU." BORGHESE'S FRIENDS COMMENT TO THIS STORY IS THAT THE AMERICANS DID NOT TAKE BORGHESE SERIOUSLY AND THEIR REPLY WAS STRICTLY A DIPLOMATIC ONE.

4. BORGHESE TAKES HIMSELF VERY SERIOUSLY AND CONTINUES TO SPEAK ABOUT THE NECESSITY OF ACTING SOON; THE COUP IS TO BE CARRIED THROUGH WITH THE USE OF UNSPECIFIED COMMANDOS WHO ARE TO SEIZE RADIO AND TV FACILITIES. FORMATION OF A TECHNICAL, NON-POLITICAL GOVERNMENT WOULD FOLLOW. BORGHESE CLAIMS THAT THE COMMANDERS OF THE ARMED FORCES HAVE AGREED TO PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE NEW REGIME. BORGHESE SEEMS UNABLE TO GRASP THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION AND CONTINUES TO FOOL HIMSELF, OR MAKE BELIEVE THAT HE IS FOOLING HIMSELF THAT THE FN CAN REALLY CARRY THROUGH A

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COUP. THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION IS THAT THE FN IS NOT CAPABLE OF CARRYING THROUGH THE AMBITIOUS PROGRAM OF REVOLUTIONIZING THE STATE. AS A MATTER OF FACT THE FN POSITION IN THE RIGHT WING ALIGNMENT IS RATHER WEAK.

5. FIELD DISSEM: STATE. GP-1

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