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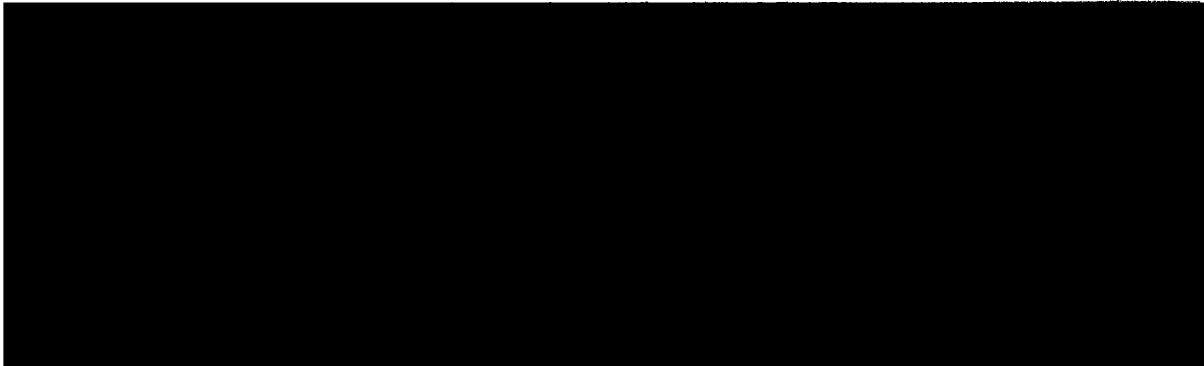
COUNTRY Italy

SUBJECT Views of Ugo La Malfa, Italian  
Minister without Portfolio

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Ugo La Malfa, Italian Minister without Portfolio, recently made the following observations on the present political situation in Italy:

1. The American stand vis-a-vis the Korean situation has had the effect of strengthening the position of the Italian Government and of the Christian Democratic Party. As a result of this, the reactionary elements within the Christian Democratic Party have been advocating a policy based on the following two points:
  - a. A complete modification of the Government's proposed social and agrarian reforms; and
  - b. The forming of a one-party Christian Democratic Government.

Premier Alcide De Gasperi opposes this reactionary trend and recently had a discussion in this connection with Amintore Fanfani, former Italian Minister of Labor, and "one of the most prominent reactionaries in the Christian Democratic Party."

2. According to La Malfa, De Gasperi had planned to extend the present coalition to include the Italian Liberal Party and the Unitary Socialist Party. In connection with this, unofficial discussions between the concerned parties were already under way. However, because of the increased reactionary opposition to such a plan, De Gasperi felt that perhaps the wisest course might be to agree to an experimental one-party government on the assumption, as he himself confided to La Malfa, that this experiment would fail and would serve as a lesson to the reactionaries who had advocated it. The non-Christian Democratic members of the Government, however, warned De Gasperi that such an experiment might jeopardize the victories already scored over the Italian Communists and would be risky in view of the approaching elections. There is, therefore, still some hope that De Gasperi, who is himself fully aware of these considerations, will continue his attempts to eliminate the reactionary opposition, thus avoiding the formation of a one-party government.

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3. La Malfa believes that, if the Italian Government retains its present status, the Italian Communist Party will continue to lose ground and will be forced to transfer its attention almost entirely to economic issues, where the Communists unfortunately have good arguments in their favor.

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