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ACTION DS-01

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	INR-07	EUR-00	SS-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00
	H-01	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	HA-09	L-03	AMAD-01	TRSE-00
	PM-10	PA-01	OMB-01	INM-08	INRE-00	USIE-00	SP-02
	SNP-01	PRS-01	DSE-00	SCT-02	P-02	T-01	/051 W

-----060772 071706Z /48 38

P 071647Z AUG 89
 FM AMEMBASSY ROME
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7053
 DEPT JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY
 USCUSTOMS WASHDC PRIORITY
 DEA HQS WASHDC PRORITY
 DIRFBI WASHDC PRIORITY
 INFO AMCONSUL PALERMO POUCH

RELEASED IN FULL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 16353

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE FOR: ROBIN ROSS, ATTY GEN'LS
 OFFICE;
 MARK RICHARD, CRIMINAL DIVISION, MOLLY WARDLOW, OIA

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
 TAGS: ASEC, PTER, SOCI, IT
 SUBJECT: ITALIAN LEADERS ADDRESS ANTI-MAFIA TURMOIL

REF: STATE 16217

1. (U) PRIME MINISTER GIULIO ANDREOTTI AND THE
 MINISTERS OF INTERIOR AND JUSTICE FELT OBLIGED TO
 BRIEF PARLIAMENT THIS PAST WEEK ON LAW AND ORDER
 ISSUES AS THE INTERNECINE STRIFE AT THE UPPER LEVELS
 OF THE ANTI-MAFIA FORCES CONTINUED UNABATED AND
 SHOWED SIGNS OF BECOMING A MAJOR POLITICAL ISSUE.

2. (U) ON THE DAY THAT ANDREOTTI SPOKE (AUGUST 4),
 ITALY'S LEADING DAILY, CORRIERE DELLA SERA,
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FRONT-PAGED A STORY WHICH MAINTAINED THAT THE TWO
 LEADING FIGURES IN THE BATTLE AGAINST ORGANIZED
 CRIME, ANTI-MAFIA HIGH COMMISSIONER DOMENICO SICA AND
 PALERMO DEPUTY PROSECUTOR GIOVANNI FALCONE, "ARE NO

LONGER ON SPEAKING TERMS." OVER THE WEEKEND, THE PRESS REPORTED THAT A BUG HAD BEEN DISCOVERED ON FALCONE'S TELEPHONES. WHO WAS DOING THE TAPPING IS NOT CLEAR. ALSO, A POLICE OFFICIAL AND HIS WIFE WERE MURDERED IN THEIR HOME OUTSIDE OF PALERMO AND THE AUTHORITIES NOW ARE CHECKING THE CASES HE WAS WORKING ON TO TRY TO OBTAIN SOME LEADS REGARDING THE PERPETRATOR(S).

3. (U) ACCUSATIONS, INNUENDOS AND RUMORS CURRENTLY ABOUND AS EVERYONE WAITS TO SEE WHAT EMERGES FROM THE VARIOUS INVESTIGATIONS UNDERWAY WHICH SEEK TO DETERMINE: 1) WHO IS THE "MOLE" WHO GUIDED THE BOMBING ATTEMPT AGAINST FALCONE LAST JUNE? (2) WHO AUTHORED THE ANONYMOUS LETTERS DESIGNED TO DISCREDIT FALCONE AND SOME CLOSE ASSOCIATES? (3) WHO ENCOURAGED COOPERATING WITNESS SALVATORE CONTORNO TO LEAVE SAFE HAVEN IN THE U.S. AND RETURN TO ITALY?

4. (U) INTERIOR MINISTER GAVA, SPEAKING TO DIFFERENT PARLIAMENTARY BODIES ON CONSECUTIVE DAYS, TERMED THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE MAFIA A "TRUE NATIONAL EMERGENCY." HE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT AS EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCEEDS AND THE NATIONAL BARRIERS COME DOWN, MAFIA EXPANSION AND OPERATIONS ARE FACILITATED AND ITALY COULD BE SEEN BY ITS PARTNERS AS AN EXPORTER OF CRIME. HE DENOUNCED THE ANONYMOUS LETTERS AS A DESTABILIZING MANEUVER AIMED AT PUTTING THOSE WORKING AGAINST THE MAFIA ON THE DEFENSIVE AND CONFIDENTIAL

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STALLING ONGOING INVESTIGATIONS INTO MONEY LAUNDERING AND OTHER MATTERS.

5. (U) WITH REGARD TO CONTORNO'S RETURN TO ITALY, GAVA STRESSED THAT CONTORNO HAD A LEGAL RIGHT TO COME BACK IF HE SO DESIRED, BUT THAT HE WAS REPEATEDLY ADVISED AGAINST IT BY THE AUTHORITIES FOR SECURITY REASONS. THIS, GAVA SAID, WAS CONFIRMED BY "REPRESENTATIVES OF THE U.S. POLICE." FURTHER, HE GAVE ASSURANCES THAT NO INVESTIGATIVE POLICE ORGANIZATION HERE HAD TRIED TO USE CONTORNO AS AN INFORMER OR UNDERCOVER AGENT SINCE HIS RETURN.

6. (U) GAVA EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR FALCONE AND STATED THAT THE SECURITY MEASURES TO PROTECT THE PROSECUTOR HAD BEEN REINFORCED. HE ALSO REITERATED THE

GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO SICA AND EXPECTATION THAT HE WOULD PRODUCE POSITIVE RESULTS. JUSTICE MINISTER VASSALLI COVERED MUCH OF THE SAME GROUND AS GAVA. HE SPOKE AGAINST PLACING ANY LIMITATIONS ON SICA, RECALLING PARLIAMENT'S STRONG AFFIRMATION WHEN THE POWERS OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE WERE INCREASED IN 1988.

7. (U) ANDREOTTI, SPEAKING A DAY AFTER THE OTHER MINISTERS, SECONDED THEIR STATEMENTS. HE ALSO TALKED OF A "NATIONAL EMERGENCY" AND DREW A PARALLEL TO THE DAYS WHEN TERRORISM WAS AT ITS HEIGHT IN ITALY. ANDREOTTI NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE POPULAR CONSENSUS WHICH ENABLED THE AUTHORITIES TO BE EFFECTIVE AGAINST THE RED BRIGADES AND OTHER GROUPS IS LACKING IN THE REGIONS WHERE THE MAFIA IS STRONGEST. HE SAID AN EFFORT MUST BE MADE TO ESTABLISH THE CREDIBILITY OF THE POLITICAL/LEGAL SYSTEM IN THOSE AREAS. ANDREOTTI

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ALSO STRESSED THE NEED FOR BETTER COORDINATION AMONG
THE ANTI-MAFIA FORCES AND SEEMED TO ENDORSE MORE
EXTENSIVE COLLABORATION BETWEEN SICA'S OFFICE AND THE
SECURITY SERVICES (SISDE AND SISME). WHILE RESERVING
THE RIGHT TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN THE FUTURE, WHEN
QUESTIONED BY THE PARLIAMENTARIANS, ANDREOTTI
EXPRESSED A RELUCTANCE TO LIMIT THE POWERS OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER BECAUSE THE OFFICE HAD BECOME A
SYMBOL AND WEAKENING IT AT THIS TIME WOULD BE A SIGN
OF DECREASED WILL TO FIGHT THE MAFIA.

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8. (C) COMMENT. THE OPEN DISARRAY AMONG THE
ANTI-MAFIA FORCES HAS SHATTERED THE QUIET OF THE DOG
DAYS OF AUGUST. THE TOP LEADERS HAVE BEEN FORCED TO
TAKE NOTE AND FACE THE MATTER PUBLICLY. OUR SENSE IS
THAT NO ONE HERE REALLY HAS A CLEAR PICTURE OF WHAT
IS GOING ON. EVERYONE SEEMS TO BE WAITING FOR THE
NEXT EVENT OR DISCLOSURE AS THE SITUATION EVOLVES.
ANDREOTTI'S CALL FOR CLOSER COORDINATION AMONG THE
ANTI-MAFIA FORCES WILL BE SEEN BY SOME AS A CRITICISM
OF SICA. BUT FOR NOW, THE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP SEEMS
TO BE LOOKING AWAY FROM THE SICA-FALCONE RIVALRY,
SUPPORTING BOTH PUBLICLY, AND HOPING SOMEHOW TO GET
THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL. WHAT IS CLEAR IS THAT
UNTIL THEY DO, THE ANTI-MAFIA EFFORT WILL SUFFER.
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