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April 28
VI-11-229ITALYMEETING OF THE INTERPARLIAMENTARY UNION IN ROME.CONDUCT OF THE COMMUNIST DELEGATES.SOURCE ROME: RFE Czechoslovakian reporter.DATE OF OBSERVATION: April 13-17 1955.

EVALUATION COMMENT: The following documents are available for inspections at the Evaluation Section (in the French language): A list of delegates to the Interparliamentary Union in ROME, as well as five "Projets de Resolution," which were copied from official publications of the Interparliamentary Union.

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The following news was obtained by the RFE Czechoslovakian reporter from a confidential source.

Source pointed out that all the meetings of the Interparliamentary Union were very lively and often developed to the stage of being quarrels in which positively electrifying and dramatic moments occurred, such as when the representatives of the communist countries threatened to walk out and refused to take part in any future work. On the other hand, throughout the entire sittings the same representatives took part in the discussions openly and amiably, without any diplomatic formalities, and it is not for nothing that the final declaration was made that "the work of the Interparliamentary Union meetings which took place in ROME proceeded in an atmosphere of cordial friendliness and sincere affection, even if the points of view of individual delegates were not always the same on various matters."

Source had to admit quite objectively that almost all the representatives of the countries of the communist bloc appeared to have been most carefully and scrupulously prepared on all the matters which were discussed by the various committees,

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and which they examined in detail. They were prepared to answer questions and make amendments or counterproposals which might be put to them by the western delegates. The various committees of the Union came to understand that the individual representatives of the communist bloc countries seemed to be in accord as to a common line of action to take. There was, however, an exceptional case which obviously none of them had imagined would arise. This was when the question of an audience with the Holy Father was under discussion. Not all the communist members were in agreement. During the debate, which lasted several hours, there was shown not only a difference in the point of view of the representatives of the different communist countries, but also between the individuals representing each country. Finally, on the proposal of the Hon. NITULESCU, it was decided to postpone the decision to another day, in so far as all the delegates were in agreement that for only part of the representatives to be received in audience by the Pope would damage the public impression that the Interparliamentary Union is an international association in which harmony reigns.

The communist delegates were anxious to save face and to avoid creating a bad impression of the Interparliamentary Union, which is of course a forum in which members of the western parliaments are able to discuss the problems of co-existence with the members of the communist bloc.

Source said it will be interesting to see how much propaganda material was being drawn from the Union meetings by the communist countries which were represented. This remark corresponds closely to facts, in so far as here in Italy, while the free press had abstained from publishing more than the officially issued news on the development of the Meetings, the Communist newspapers, L'UNITA', AVANTI and IL PAESE have been full of detailed information on all the proceedings, even though their reports have been tendentious. L'UNITA', the official organ of the Italian Communist Party, is undoubtedly better informed than the others, although it has not reported on the work of the Union. It has made public all items on which agreement has been reached and when writing on the work of the separate Committees it has treated their activities as some of the most sensational happenings of the times.

For example, the Belgian delegates LAMBOTTE and ROLIN proposed that the communist delegates should take it on their shoulders to push for free elections in their countries at the end of 1956. The reaction of the Communist delegates was unexpectedly rowdy, and toward the end of their arguing, a Bulgarian and a Rumanian delegate put forward much the

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following arguments: "Very well. We will agree to free political elections in the countries of the People's Republics on condition that free elections will also be held in all Asia, Africa and the Belgian Congo!"

Source remarked that this statement was a great mistake on the part of the communists, for by so saying, they practically admitted that in their own countries elections are not free. Even the communist delegates suddenly seemed to realize the obvious truth that the problem of free elections really exists in their countries. This was remarked upon rather sarcastically by a British delegate who said "We shall eventually be able to return to this question of free elections, as we have already arranged the times and places of our meetings for the next three years. I would like, however, to ask our Honorable members from the People's Democracies, to swear here and now that whatever initiative may be taken toward free elections in their countries may be conceded to the Interparliamentary Union, thereby adding to its enduring prestige. I therefore put forward the proposal that the Interparliamentary Union should institute a special order to be granted to such members for "services rendered."

Taking up the same tone of irony, the Rumanian delegate, the Hon. CONSTANTINESCU rebuffed the British speaker saying that the members were present in a private capacity and had no power over their own parliaments or governments, and although many of them might appear tough, in fact they were rather weak, in spite of the offered enticement of an "Order for Services Rendered."

A Greek delegate, the Hon. NAPTIS, said "We are openly speaking of the fact that the work of the Union is shared by delegates of parliaments which have not been elected freely, while in the Statute of the Interparliamentary Union it is stated that it was to be a "gathering of members of freely elected parliaments." The general indignation reached its culmination when one of the communist members stated that this matter should not be brought up when the meetings had already reached their third day, and at the beginning it had not been considered a "problem" by anyone, and no amendments had hitherto been put forward nor controversy arisen concerning it. The Greek delegate shouted and thumped his fist on the table as he exclaimed that this argument was neither dignified nor worthy of the attention of any delegates of the parliaments of the free countries, nor of himself as a member of the free parliament of Greece.

The Interparliamentary Union discussed the question of the participation of the exiled Spanish politicians, and it was pointed out that if exiled politicians of Spain were admitted to membership, and not the members of the present Fascist government, it stood to reason that exiled politicians

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of the communist countries ought to be admitted instead of the present members. The Greek delegates, the Hons. NAPTIS and KEFALOYAUNIS held strongly to this point, until it reached the stage of possible inclusion in the orders of the day at the meetings which are to be held in BANGKOK.

Source described yet another brush between Greek and communist delegates on the question of co-existence. The communists unanimously agreed that the expression "co-existence" would remain only an expression even in the future unless the Parliamentary Union itself made the effort to put it into practice. At this the Hon. KEFALOYAUNIS sprang to his feet and without the formality of asking to speak, he thumped on the table and shouted angrily, "Gentlemen! This is not in order! These persons want to live in co-existence with us, but first there are some accounts to be settled. These gentlemen who have come to ROME are representatives of governments which robbed us of 30,000 of our innocent children, and by the most inhumane methods tore them from the education and patriotism of their nation, making them enemies of their native land and their own parents. One day these children of ours will take up arms and march against our own country to "liberate it." They will want to "liberate" a country which is already free and independent and where the parliament is elected openly and freely. Must we then sit at the same table with these members? Must we discuss with them the problem of co-existence? Gentlemen, this is impossible!" The communist delegates were furious with the Greek speaker but they did not take him up on any point.

Source felt that the delegates from the communist countries were primarily present to listen and observe and judge the "maturity" of the members of the western parliaments, and ascertain by what method they (the communists) could impose their tactics and point of view on the present international situation. He thought that at the previous meetings, which were held at MONACO and NICE, the members were present much in the capacity of "tourists," whereas the work which has been carried out at the ROME meetings has, and will have, an importance of the first order in present policy and may perhaps influence further international developments.

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