

The Dove and the Eagle

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By

Roberto Fornasier

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by Roberto Fornasier

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INTRODUCTION

“The foundation and source of literary excellence is wisdom”.
—Horatius, *Ars Poetica*¹

The Latin poet Horatio wrote, over two millennia ago, that “right knowledge” is at the base of any good writing; a fortiori, writing about a historical topic requires an in-depth investigation of the context and facts that happened, together with an interpretative criterion that explains them. But why should we study this particular historical period, the late Sixties and mid Seventies, and produce research on an area already heavy with publications? The ultimate goal of this research is to analyse the political-diplomatic relations that elapsed between the Italian and American governments, keeping at the centre the figure of Mariano Rumor (1915-1990). In light of the harsh criticism aimed at the foreign policy of President Richard Nixon and his National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger, for example by the American neo-Conservatives,² or the Carter Administration, it is here proposed that much can be learnt from comparing US policy with the experience of Rumor. He embraced a completely different political and philosophical model, based essentially on the Church social teachings. Today, in the post-September 11 world, when the US has sometimes tried to export “democracy” at the tip of the bayonet, it becomes more relevant than ever to explore the thought of people like Rumor, who tried to instil an ethical principle into foreign policy and to make the “leaven of the Gospel” as the basis of their international choices.

This work therefore aims to examine the political life of Rumor on a comparative basis, taking into account the moves and judgements of

¹ “Scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons”, or “Good sense, the fountain of the muse’s art”: Quintus Horatius Flaccus, *Ars Poetica*, in *The Odes, Epodes, Satires, and Epistles*, London and New York: Frederick Warne & C., 1889, verse 309.

² Cfr., for example, J. Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism. Intellectuals and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1994*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995; G. Borgognone, *La destra americana. Dall’isolazionismo ai neocons*, Rome-Bari: Laterza, 2004.

Italy's major ally, the United States of America.³ The purpose is to understand how the Christian Democratic party (DC)—the dominant political structure in Italy—related to its main overseas ally. Therefore, this is not only an analysis of “Italy seen from Washington”, such as the historian Gentiloni Silveri has already written, but a fresco of DC foreign policy towards Washington.⁴ The years 1968-76 coincided with the apogee of a political leader still little studied by historians, Mariano Rumor, five times Prime Minister, Interior Minister in the darkest moments of terrorism, then, for two years, at the head of the Italian Foreign Office in the last Moro governments. Rumor was hence at the very centre of political events in the Sixties and the Seventies, in the same years when Nixon—and then Gerald Ford—were leading the United States. It seems therefore natural to compare these two figures, Rumor and Nixon, extremely different from any point of view. On one side, was an enigmatic leader, resolute and determined in foreign policy, advised by a leading exponent of the Realist thought, Kissinger—and not coincidentally Machiavelli wrote in the *Prince* that it was not “of little importance for a prince the appointment of the Ministries, and which ones are good, or not, according to the prudence of the prince”.⁵ On the other side, was a preacher of mediation, a follower of Catholic thinkers, such as Giuseppe Toniolo (1845-1918) and Jacques Maritain (1882-1973), who grew up within the Italian Catholic Action and the ACLI (Italian Catholic Workers' Associations). On one side, the indefatigable defenders of an old-style diplomacy aimed to spread America's power throughout the world. On the other, a forceful and exuberant politician, leading “a rather monkish life”,⁶ remained attached to his native land, living between Rome and Vicenza, at his old house on the river Bacchiglione. A document of the Italian Communist Party (PCI), drafted in the early Seventies, even while it considered Rumor an enemy, vividly described him as a politician gifted

³ It is given as expected, using the words of Gentiloni Silveri, that “the terminological simplification around the expression ‘the United States’ does not fully represents a complex system made up by men, political-diplomatic responsibilities and different bodies which compose—not always in harmony and in coherence—the decisional process of the following administrations”: U. Gentiloni Silveri, *Fanfani visto da Washington*, in A. Giovagnoli - L. Tosi (edited by), *Amintore Fanfani e la politica estera italiana*, Venice: Marsilio, 2010, p. 112.

⁴ U. Gentiloni Silveri, *L'Italia sospesa. La crisi degli anni Settanta vista da Washington*, Turin: Einaudi, 2009.

⁵ N. Machiavelli, *Il principe*, Rome: Newton, 1995, § XXII.

⁶ JPL, National security File - Country File, Italy, b. 198, “Profile of M. Rumor”, October 1967.

of political intuition, a skilled and wise diplomat, open to the compromise, an efficient administrator, with the great capacity “to smooth contrasts”, a staunch anti-Communist, adverse to the Soviet ideology, convinced of the innate superiority of the Catholic-inspired socio-political action: “Rumor politically is a moderate Catholic; ideologically is a Social Catholic, religiously is a pre-Council Catholic”.⁷

The time limits of this research range from the launch of the first Rumor government, in December 1968, to the death of Aldo Moro in 1978, even if the bulk of the events relating to Rumor ended in the summer 1976, with the fall of Moro’s fifth government, in which Rumor acted as Foreign Minister, a period which almost exactly coincides with the Nixon and Ford Administrations in Washington. Rumor, however, was a protagonist of Italian political life before 1968, as General Secretary of the Christian Democratic Party, and after 1976, as a politician deeply involved in promoting the European ideals. Within the years 1968-76, it is absolutely true, as expressed by Kissinger, that “when an historian deals with previous centuries, the problem is to find sufficient contemporary material; when he writes of modern diplomacy, the problem is to avoid being inundated by it”.⁸ In the face of the Nixon Administration, “one of the most written-about, analyzed, discussed and examined”,⁹ the historian’s duty seems impossible; rivers of ink have been spilled on every aspect of Nixon’s life and politics and that of his right hand man, Kissinger. So, again we raise the question: why does it deserve to write another book on this historical period? The intent arises from the stimulating necessity to deepen, to explain—and partially to challenge—the cliché that Italy, just at the zenith of Rumor’s political career, experienced its nadir on the international scene. Authoritative scholars, such as the historian Antonio Varsori, write that “in this phase, Italy was therefore more an object than a subject of international politics, a kind of ‘big sick’ of Europe, whose ‘illness’ could create serious problems to the international and communitarian balances”.¹⁰ Furthermore, in the Seventies, Italy supposedly played a low profile foreign policy, deeply conditioned by domestic problems.¹¹

⁷ APCI, 0307, 2783- on, “Note on Rumor”, October 13, 1969.

⁸ H. Kissinger, *The White House Years*, London: Weidenfeld&Nicholson - M. Joseph, 1979, p. XXII.

⁹ M.A. Genovese, *The Nixon Presidency. Power and Politics in Turbulent Times*, Westport (CT): Greenwood Press, 1990, p. 1.

¹⁰ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d’Europa? L’Italia e l’integrazione europea dal 1947 a oggi*, Soveria Mannelli (Cz): Rubbettino, 2010, p. 288.

¹¹ Id., *L’europeismo nella politica estera italiana*, in L. Tosi (edited by), *L’Italia e le organizzazioni internazionali*, Padua: Cedam 1999, p. 406.

The questions from which the research starts are: what was Christian Democracy's attitude toward the United States during those turbulent years? Is the historiographical cliché correct that, during the late Sixties and early Seventies, Rumor's party became so sclerotic as not to offer any long-term, coherent policy in foreign affairs? Is it true that all its attentions were directed at domestic problems and that it simply had to "sail on sight" in terms of foreign policy?

Throughout these years, Washington continued to be Italy's most privileged interlocutor. In addition, as in previous decades, the Atlantic Alliance, the commitment to European integration and the Mediterranean remained the fundamental and natural pillars of Italy's foreign policy. Alongside this, the Christian Democratic leaders of the period were also very careful to pursue the goal of peace: Italy, having rejected traditional power politics at the end of World War II, decided actively to participate in the life of international organizations and operate a genuine policy of international cooperation.¹² In this context, a Catholic intellectual and fellow-citizen of Rumor, linked to him by a long friendship, Vittorino Veronese (1910-1986), UNESCO General Director between 1958 and 1961, is a paradigmatic figure, because he tried to conjugate the ideal of peace with the respect for basic human rights.¹³ In November 1975, in a meeting of the DC parties' World Union, Rumor stressed the importance of avoiding any regime not directly inspired to democracy and pluralism. As he had done many times in the past, he reaffirmed that Christianity was an ideological challenge both to Marxism and Liberalism; a Christian-inspired government was less inclined to degenerate into totalitarian or nationalistic regimes, and could even act as a vaccine against "pseudo-Enlightened despotisms" or "technocratic and paternalistic systems".¹⁴ Italy, in sum, led by Christian Democratic politicians loyal to the Church teachings, aimed to a foreign policy that reflected the ideals of the Gospel, which could bring—to quote the French philosopher Henri Bergson—"a supplement of soul" to the world to reach a stronger mutual understanding among people.

¹² L. Tosi, *L'Italia fra la Nato e l'Onu*, in A. Giovagnoli - L. Tosi (edited by), *Un ponte sull'Atlantico. L'Alleanza occidentale 1949-1999*, Milan: Guerini, 2003, pp. 217-232.

¹³ R. Fornasier, *Vittorino Veronese. Un cristiano d'avanguardia*, Rome: Studium, 2011; L. Medici, *Aspetti e momenti della partecipazione italiana all'Unesco*, in F. Romero - A. Varsori (edited by), *Nazione, interdipendenza, integrazione. Le relazioni internazionali dell'Italia (1917-1989)*, vol. 2, Rome: Carocci, 2005, pp. 85-103.

¹⁴ *Il Popolo*, November 29 and 30, 1975.

Alongside this, however, Italy, in its role of a medium-size power, was constantly worried about being excluded from the close circle of so-called "Great Powers". Thus, the visits overseas of Italian Prime Ministers and Presidents served also to show to the Americans how strongly Italy wanted to be one of NATO's leading powers. In this context, with the arrival of Rumor at *Palazzo Chigi*, the Prime Minister's official residence, Italy promoted a strongly pro-European foreign policy, but, at the same time, it was faithful to the Atlantic choice and characterized by a virulent anti-Communism. But in the late Sixties, the complex socio-political reality of Italy limited its choices in the international field. Certainly the Christian Democratic political class withdrew in itself; European integration experienced a slowdown, partly due to the economic crisis, so that it appeared to be only a customs union with a common agricultural policy.¹⁵ But we should also keep in mind that Rumor, in a bipolar world where Nixon and Kissinger's choices were inspired by a Machiavellian-style *Realpolitik*, tried to pursue a coherent policy that would lead to a free, united and plural international environment, to a responsible human society and not a jungle, to an open and genuinely federal European Community, with a priority placed on social matters rather than nationalism.

How did Italy appear in these years to the United States? A basic point that American diplomats emphasized was that the centre-left government, that is the political alliance between DC and Socialists, forged with an anti-Communist function, was the only possible political formula.¹⁶ This was a datum point even for Rumor, who always strove to aggregate the small lay parties and the Socialists to his governments, believing that any "opening to the right", as happened with the first two Andreotti governments in 1972, was little suited to this challenging historical period. It must be admitted that domestic issues, deriving from different motivations, conditioned all the Rumor governments, reducing their margin of manoeuvre on the international field. Rumor's choices were weakened by the Italian electoral system, which created unstable and quarrelsome coalitions; by ideological considerations; by the international system of alliances; by the geographic location of the country, its political and military weight; and by the worsening of the economic crisis. Kissinger himself, recalling Nixon's first trip to Italy in 1969, wrote that "no doubt Italy's domestic problems claimed so much of the attention of

¹⁵ A. Varsori, *Scelta atlantica e scelta europea nella politica estera italiana*, in Giovagnoli - Tosi, *Un ponte sull'Atlantico*, p. 262.

¹⁶ R.C. Doty, "Rumor Organizes Cabinet in Italy", in *The New York Times*, December 13, 1968.

the top leadership that foreign policy played a secondary role”.¹⁷ Nevertheless, in the most important areas—Atlantism, Europeanism, and East-West relations—few changes were perceived in the alternation between Pietro Nenni (1891-1980), Aldo Moro (1916-1978), Giuseppe Medici (1907-2000) and Rumor at the *Farnesina*, the Italian Foreign Office, even if the “approaching styles” to foreign policy changed. This was because each Foreign Minister was, first of all, a politician deeply embedded inside the Italian political life, and domestic and party-related issues always played an essential role in shaping their foreign policy choices.

Next to Rumor, who were the leading protagonists of Italian foreign policy in these years? First, we have to consider that the Italian constitutional system was based on a parliamentary-elected President of the Republic, a bicameral legislature, elected every five years, which consisted of a fully elected Chamber of Deputies of 630 members and a Senate of 315 elected members, plus a very small number of appointed politicians. The Cabinet—or Council of Ministers—was and is headed by a Prime Minister, who appoints the other Ministers through the President, and is responsible before Parliament. So, the other protagonists, next to Rumor, were *in primis* his party colleagues, Aldo Moro first, then Emilio Colombo (born 1920) and Giulio Andreotti (born 1919), who took their turns at the helm of the government. The Italian actors had, as their counterparts in Washington, Nixon and Kissinger, two champions of a realist foreign policy, who were able to collect a number of historical successes—such as the restoration of relations with Beijing and the signature of the strategic arms limitation treaty (SALT) with the Soviet Union—at least until the Watergate scandal overwhelmed the American President.¹⁸ After August 1974, Italy had to relate with the Ford Administration, but little changed, because Kissinger remained as Secretary of State (a post he had taken up in 1973, combining it for two years with his original position as National Security Adviser). In Washington, since 1967, Italy was represented by Ambassador Egidio

¹⁷ Kissinger, *The White House Years*, p. 100.

¹⁸ C.L. Sulzberger, *The World and Richard Nixon*, New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1987, p. 1. “On the whole, Nixon’s foreign policy was successful and cleverly conceived” (p. 3). Sulzberger, correspondent for the *New York Times*, considered Nixon as a “Janus”, disastrous on domestic affairs, but a good leader in foreign policy. According to Nixon, “domestic policy was always of far less interest than foreign policy and, where necessary, subordinated to it” (W. Bundy, *A Tangled Web. The Making of Foreign Policy in the Nixon Presidency*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1998, p. 266).

Ortona (1910-1996), recalled to Rome only in June 1975 and replaced by Roberto Gaja (1912-1992).¹⁹ Ortona, in 1967, was the Ambassador who “filled the highest chair in our diplomacy”.²⁰ In a private profile, written in February 1971, he was depicted as a pro-American diplomat, a very sharp and resourceful man, “a charming, pleasant and amusing personality”.²¹ On June 27, 1975, he was thanked for his long and fruitful work by the US President Ford and Kissinger, and on July 14 Gaja presented his credentials.²² In April 1978, Gaja was succeeded by Paolo Pansa Cedronio, who previously had been Deputy General Secretary of NATO and was described by American sources as an “able, direct, conscientious and personable” diplomat, “dependable, sensitive to the feelings of his associates, and discreet in his dealings”.²³

Under the Nixon Administration, however, the State Department—at least in 1969-73, while it was led by William P. Rogers (1913-2001)—was partially excluded from the fundamental foreign policy decisions, which were taken by a restricted circle around to Nixon and Kissinger.²⁴ However, the Ambassadors sent to the *Palazzo Margherita*, once residence of the Queen Mother of Italy, Margaret of Savoy, but now the US Embassy in Rome, all proved to be first rank diplomats, who had to manage a complex system. Ambassador Richard Gardner remembers that in 1977 he had to supervise 956 employees (two thirds in Rome, and the others in the American Consulates of Genoa, Turin, Milan, Florence, Trieste, Naples and Palermo). John Volpe explained that the US Ambassador was not “simply the senior representative of the Department of State”, but is “the President’s man, with overall responsibility for and

¹⁹ On his appointment: JPL, National security File - Country File, Italy, b. 198, Memorandum for W.W. Rostow, 12 June 1967; on his leave, FPL, Memorandum of Conversation, box 12, June 3, 1975.

²⁰ SEN, A. Fanfani, b. 39, f. 12, tel. 15558, S. Fenoaltea to the State Department, May 19, 1967.

²¹ Nara, Rg 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972, box 537, Confidential profile, February 1971. In another profile (in NPL, WHCF, Subject Files, CO 72, Italy, box 41, “Egidio Ortona”, February 1971) he was described as an expert diplomat, with 39 years of service, endowed with a pleasant and amusing personality.

²² FPL, Memoranda of Conversations, b. 13, June 27, 1975; July 14, 1975. See also WHCF, Subject File - CO 72, b. 28.

²³ CPL, RAC Project Number NCL-23 (Staff Material: Europe/USSR/East-West)-24-3-37-7.

²⁴ It is indicative that, when Kissinger proclaimed in April 1973 the so-called Year of Europe, “not even Secretary of State William Rogers had advance notice of Kissinger’s terms”: L.S. Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement. Nato’s First Fifty Years*, Westport (CT) and London: Praeger, 1999, p. 155.

authority over all official US elements in the country”.²⁵ Gardner Ackley, on the other hand, in an oral interview, explained that Italy represented “in some ways” an important post, “but an exceedingly unimportant post in most ways. [...] So the job was administrative and one of communication”.²⁶ Since April 1968, in Rome resided H. Gardner Ackley (1915-1998), former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors, who had replaced Frederick Reinhardt (1911-1971)—“a well-educated and prudent man, who knew many languages”²⁷—and remained in office until August 1969. A sincere democratic, Ackley was also an expert in economic affairs and knew Italy thanks to previous experiences of study in our country.²⁸

After Ackley, Nixon entrusted the Italian affairs to Graham A. Martin (1912-1990), a former journalist and US Army colonel, appointed in September 1969.²⁹ Previously, he had served as Ambassador to Thailand, from 1963 to 1967, and then had lived two years in Washington as Special Assistant of the Secretary for Refugee and Migration Affairs. On October 9, 1969, speaking with the Foreign Minister Moro, Nixon confided him that Martin had been one of his closest friends for fifteen years and could rely on him also because he was an expert both of European and Asiatic affairs.³⁰ On October 17, Kissinger wrote to the President that Martin was “one of our ablest career diplomats”, but he would have encountered some difficulties to approach Rumor in that ticklish moment when it was under discussion the hypothesis to reduce US military personnel in Italy.³¹ Three days later, Martin saw Nixon and the following day flew to Italy,³² where he remained until February 1973. Several historians agree that he did not hesitate “to connect preferably with right or extreme right milieus”, such

²⁵ Volpe, b. 82, f. 39, Speech of May 5, 1973.

²⁶ Ackley, b. 36, Transcripts of an oral interview, March 7, 1974.

²⁷ G. Andreotti, *Gli Usa visti da vicino*, Milan: Rizzoli, 1989, pp. 71-72.

²⁸ Nara, Rg 59, CFPF 1967-1969, box 2232, Airgram A-697, January 5, 1968. Ackley, b. 35, disp. 582, January 8, 1968; JPL, National Security File - Country File, Italy, b. 197, “State Dept. for the Press”, n. 53, 21 March 1968; V. Bosco, *L'amministrazione Nixon in Italia. Tra distensione europea e crisi mediterranea (1968-1975)*, Rome: Eurilink, 2009, p. 32.

²⁹ Martin presented his credentials to President G. Saragat on October 30, 1969: cfr. NPL, WHCF, Subject Files, CO 72, Italy, box 41, “Memo to Ron”, 30 October 1969.

³⁰ Memorandum of Conversation, White House, 9 October 1969, in NPL, NSCF, Country Files-Europe, box 694.

³¹ NPL, NSCF, Country Files-Europe, box 694, H. Kissinger to R. Nixon, October 17, 1969.

³² Ivi, box 694, Memorandum of T.L. Eliot to H. Kissinger, October 17, 1969.

as the neo-Fascist Italian Social Movement, to strengthen the Italian anti-Communist forces.³³ Martin proved to be a brilliant ambassador, deeply Machiavellian, in the sense he was astute and mischievous, a great calculating and centralising man.

In 1973, Martin moved to the hot seat of Saigon and was replaced by John A. Volpe (1908-1994), formerly the Secretary of Transportation.³⁴ Volpe, another faithful Nixonian, presented his credentials to President Giovanni Leone on March 6, and his appointment proved to be the crowning achievement of his public career, fulfilling a twenty-year-long dream.³⁵ Reaching Rome, he declared his pride in having an Italian ancestry, as well as the fact that he was “the American emissary of a President who has renewed our Nation’s mission of friendship with all the people of the world”.³⁶ Born in Massachusetts, into a family of Italian immigrants, Volpe had trained as an architect and run his own construction firm, which, after the Second World War, grew to a national concern: “from a modest worker and plasterer”, he became “a successful house builder”.³⁷ Volpe then entered US politics as a Republican, becoming Commissioner of the Massachusetts Public Works in 1953. In 1956-57, he was appointed federal highways Administrator, and in 1960 Governor of the State, then re-elected in 1964 and 1966. He not only received several honorary degrees from American colleges and universities, but also the

³³ According to Wollemborg, the decision to appoint Martin as Ambassador in Italy “was a very inappropriate choice, because Martin proved to be a very close and stand-offish person, not only few prepared to represent the United States in a country as Italy, but apparently few interested to deep its knowledge (starting from the language) and at the same time convinced to know how and when apply the American influence on Italian affairs” (L.J. Wollemborg, *Stelle, strisce e tricolore. Trent’anni di vicende politiche fra Roma e Washington*, Milan: Mondadori, 1983, pp. 265-266). Margiocco, on the other hand, describes him as a career diplomat “capable and efficient in his work, elegant and reserved, terribly rigid” and anti-Communist: M. Margiocco, *Stati Uniti e Pci. 1943-1980*, Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1981, p. 135. Cfr. also the judgement of two Italian historians: E. Santarelli, *Storia critica della Repubblica. L’Italia dal 1945 al 1994*, 3rd ed., Milan: Feltrinelli, 1997, p. 221; P. Craveri, *La Repubblica dal 1958 al 1992*, in *Storia d’Italia*, vol. XXIV, Turin: Utet, 1995, p. 464.

³⁴ To introduce his life, see K. Kilgore, *John Volpe. The Life of an Immigrant’s Son*, Dublin (N.H.): Yankee Books, 1987.

³⁵ NPL, WHCF, Subject Files, FO, box 21, “Meeting with the Hon. John Volpe”, of H. Kissinger, February 21, 1973; NSCF, Country Files-Europe, box 696, H. Kissinger to R. Nixon, March 9, 1973.

³⁶ Volpe, b. 65, f. 20, Speech of December 7, 1972.

³⁷ *Il Popolo*, March 4, 1973.

medal of “Knight of Grand Cross” in Italy and two Vatican honours.³⁸ Volpe certainly loved Italy: he had been twenty-two times to the country before becoming Ambassador and had visited Florence in 1966, after floods caused a severe damage, to help the local refugees.³⁹ At the same time, he always professed his Catholic faith and his closeness to the Holy See, visiting the Pope several times and sharing, as we will see, some points in common with Rumor’s thought.⁴⁰ On January 24, 1977, with a new Democratic administration in Washington, Volpe offered his resignation, and was succeeded by Richard Gardner (born 1927), a former fiercely anti-Communist officer of the State Department, professor of Law at Columbia University, married to a Venetian woman, and “a very early Carter supporter”.⁴¹ The Italian press welcomed the arrival of Gardner, reporting that he belonged “to that group of liberal intellectuals who add an idealistic component to their realism”.⁴²

The present work is divided into three parts. The first traces Rumor’s political career from the DC Secretariat to the role of Prime Minister, and then Foreign Affairs Minister, until 1977 and 1978, when he voluntarily left any active political role because he was involved in accusations of bribery. The second part focuses on the problematic knots that—according to Washington—undermined and conditioned Italian foreign policy. This included the inner fragility of the Italian governments, composed of coalitions which lasted only a few months thanks to internal bickering, but also the divisions within the DC, the largest ruling party, which was a source of concern for the American Administration, as was the evolution of the largest Communist party in Europe, led first by Luigi Longo (1900-

³⁸ Volpe obtained this decoration in October 1969: cfr. NPL, NSCF, Country Files-Europe, box 732, J. Volpe to R. Nixon, October 23, 1969. Wollemborg writes that Volpe “was not surely a progressist, but a man of common sense who, animated by sincere interest and fondness for the native land of his parents, tried to understand and translate for his government the conditions and aspirations of the Italian people” (Wollemborg, *Stelle, stricie e tricolore*, p. 322).

³⁹ Volpe, b. 67, f. 6, speech of September 13, 1973.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, f. 29, speech of December 15, 1973.

⁴¹ Z. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor, 1977-1981*, London: Weidenfeld&Nicolson, 1983, p. 7; R. Gardner, *Jimmy Carter. Who is he? What does he represent? What does he want?*, Speech in Milan, 16 May 1977, in CPL, WHCF, Subject File, Foreign Affairs, FO-8. Cfr. also the Ambassador’s memories, R.N. Gardner, *Mission: Italy. Gli anni di piombo raccontati dall’ambasciatore americano a Roma*, Milan: Mondadori, 2004.

⁴² From the Socialist newspaper *L’Avanti*, January 8, 1977, as reported in CPL, NSA, Brzezinski Material Country File, b. 38, “Italian Media Reaction - Designation of R.N. Gardner as Ambassador to Italy”.

1980) and then Enrico Berlinguer (1922-1984). Another important factor conditioning Italian foreign policy was its domestic social situation, plagued by the terrible experience of terrorism, which targeted judges, politicians, professors and policemen, until the kidnapping and murder of Moro. Attention will also be paid to the Catholic Church, seen by Washington more as a State and a political actor, than as a spiritual and religious entity, and its impact on Italian politics. In this matter, paradigmatic was the experience lived by the ACLI, a Catholic lay organization, which quickly passed from fidelity to the Popes' Magisterium to the dangerous embrace of a Communist ideal. The third part of the work, finally, compares the foreign policy pursued by the American eagle, that is with the choices made by Nixon and Kissinger, with that of the Italian dove, represented by Rumor, through concrete examples—the Vietnam War, the Helsinki process, the relationship with Beijing, and others—to delineate the philosophy at the base of their political choices.

The main sources for this work come from several archives in the United States of America and Italy: at the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland, I found key documents used in the first and second part of the research, to understand American's point of view. I approached the sources, both in Washington and in the Presidential Libraries, with a set of questions in mind: what were Rumor's basic foreign policy ideas? How did the Nixon Administration see Rumor and the Italian governments? Were there significant differences between Rumor and the other Italian politicians in confronting the major Italian ally?⁴³ Did the American attitude towards Italy change with the Ford Administration? Did Italy modify its fundamental foreign policy aims after 1976? The basic assumptions of the research have been corroborated by collecting primary sources in various other sites. At the Richard Nixon Presidential Library (Yorba Linda, California) I found a wonderful, quiet and very stimulating place for historians. Highly valuable materials were collected from the Gerald Ford Presidential Library (Ann Arbor), Jimmy Carter Presidential Library (Atlanta, Georgia), Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library (Austin, Texas) and in the personal papers of Ambassadors Ackley (Michigan University) and Volpe (Northeastern University). At the Central Archive of State, in Rome, I consulted the private papers of Aldo Moro, Ugo La Malfa, and Pietro Nenni, while to the DC Historic Archive, within the "Luigi Sturzo Institute", I returned

⁴³ For the method used to model this work, useful is M. Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History. A Guide to Method*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006.

with pleasure, remembering my long studies over the papers of V. Veronese. Important documents, used to improve and confirm the ideas of the research, come from the archives of the PCI—in Rome—and the PSI—in Florence. Many theses were corroborated by the external point of view of the British diplomats in Rome, as they emerge from the National Archives at Kew.

I want to thank here collectively all the people who, in Italy, in Great Britain and in the United States have helped me in these years of research, but a particular mention goes to Professor J.W. Young, who greatly supported me in Nottingham, despite being overwhelmed by academic and administrative duties. In Padua, great appreciation for my work came from professors M. Fioravanzo and G. Silvano. At home, while cloistered in a studio with stacks of books and papers, I could type the manuscript nearby the pleasant company of my wife and my small baby, who I saw taking his first tottering steps.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACLI:	Italian Catholic Workers' Associations
ACS:	Central Archive of State, Italy
AGIP:	National Italian Oil Company
APCI:	Italian Communist Party Archive
ASILS:	Historic Archive at the "Luigi Sturzo Institute"
ASOC:	Italian Socialist Party Archive
B.:	box
F.:	folder
CDU:	West Germany Christian Democratic Union
CEA:	Council of Economic Advisers
CFPF:	Central Foreign Policy Files
CGIL:	Italian General Confederation of Work
CIA:	Central Intelligence Agency
CISL:	Italian Confederation of Workers Unions
Co:	Country
CONSOB:	National Commission for Societies and Stock Exchange
CPL:	J.E. Carter Presidential Library
CSCE:	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CSM:	Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza Personal Papers
D.G.D.U.S.:	United States Declassified Government Documents
DC:	Italian Christian Democratic Party
EEC:	European Economic Community
ENI:	National Hydrocarbon Corporation
FCO:	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FMI:	International Monetary Fund
FPL:	G.R. Ford Presidential Library
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
HAEU:	Historical Archives European Union
JPL:	L.B. Johnson Presidential Library
KPL:	J.F. Kennedy Presidential Library
MCL:	Christian Movement of the Workers
ME:	European Movement
MPL:	Political Movement of the Workers
MRP:	Mouvement Républicain Populaire
MSI:	Italian Social Movement
NA :	National Archives, UK
Nara:	National Archives and Records Administration, USA
NPL:	R.M. Nixon Presidential Library
NSA:	National Security Adviser

NSCF:	National Security Council Files
NSDM:	National Security Decision Memorandum
NSSM:	National Security Study Memorandum
OC:	J. Maritain's <i>Oeuvres Complètes</i> (Éditions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse, Éditions Saint-Paul Paris)
OPEC:	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PCI:	Italian Communist Party
PLI:	Italian Liberal Party
PPI:	Italian Popular Party
PRG:	Provisional Revolutionary Government (of Vietnam)
PRI:	Italian Republican Party
PSDI:	Italian Social-Democratic Party
PSI:	Italian Socialist Party
PSIUP:	Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity
PSU:	Unitarian Socialist Party
RAC Project:	Remote Archives Capture Project
Rg:	Record Group
SEN:	Historic Archive of the Italian Senate
SID:	Information Service of Defence
SISDE:	Information Service and Democratic Security
SISMI:	Information Service and Military Security
SNAM:	National Society Methane Pipelines
Tel.:	Telegram
UCID:	Union of Christian Entrepreneurs and Managers
UECD:	Christian Democrats European Union
UIL:	Italian Federation of Trade Unions
US:	United States of America
VIP:	Very Important Person
WHCF:	White House Central Files
WHSF:	White House Social Files

PART I.

FACTS

The purpose of this section is to give a detailed historic frame of Rumor's political career; using a lot of evidence from US government documents, the aim is to reveal Washington's view of Italian politics, Rumor and other political leaders. The section will start with the year 1967, which saw Rumor at the apex of his experience as DC Secretary and will continue through all the Seventies, when he became Prime Minister—five times—, Minister of Interior and Minister of Foreign Affairs, showing the fears, the concerns, the comments—sometimes really cynic—, the positive and negative judgments, of the US Administration on the development of the Italian political affairs.

CHAPTER ONE

1967, THE YEAR OF RUMOR

“A great party does not live and work efficiently and with long-lasting results if it grows indifferent from the tumultuous course of social life and if it does not react on it with a synthetic vision capable to impose itself for the intimate sense of validity of its policy, and the intelligence of the public support. For this reason, to the right evaluation of all our men and our experiences, we managed the task of an enrichment and a constant renewal of our forces and our leadership. We need to be open to ideas, which are the thread that binds one generation to another, and make room for them. For this reason, our renewed attention to the world of culture. To be clear: not to the culture, however qualified, but to the culture *tout court*. Of course, we feel naturally a more vivid and immediate tie with the Catholic culture, but we understand that today, as never before, the opening must be wider and the attention more sensitive to catch—even in a frank dissent—what is alive and authentic, the ideals and values which lead to and enliven the civil society”.

—Mariano Rumor, preliminary report to the tenth DC national Congress, November 23, 1967¹

In 1967, Mariano Rumor—this jovial, bespectacled politician with a contagious smile, an orthodox Catholic and a bulwark against Communism—was fifty-two years old and boasted a high respectable political curriculum: he had already climbed up all the steps within his party, until reaching the prestigious seat of General Secretary, and had been appointed Minister in several governments.² Now, reasonably, the next stop would be the presidency of the Italian Council of Ministers. Rumor came from Veneto, a region for long ruled by conservative Catholics, and he descended from an eminent family with deep humanistic traditions, traditions tied to a small printers business, where the works of Catholic Venetian authors were published. During his cultural formation, a considerable influence on

¹ *Atti del X Congresso nazionale della Democrazia cristiana*, Rome: DC Spes, 1969.

² The list of the DC national Secretaries is in R. Leonardi - D.A. Wertman, *Italian Christian Democracy. The Politics of Dominance*, Basingstoke (UK) and London: MacMillan, 1989, p. 64.

him had been the Catholic Venetian writers Antonio Fogazzaro (1842-1911) and Giacomo Zanella (1820-1889), but also his two uncles, one paternal—the historian, Sebastiano Rumor—and the other maternal—the man of letters, Piero Nardi. The famous Italian historian Gabriele De Rosa, describing Rumor at their first meeting, in March 1972, presented him as:

a character that intrigues me more and more, difficult to decipher. Rumor has lived and been trained in a Catholic family, deeply devoted to the Church, but who had dealings with Fogazzaro, of whom Rumor admired the works and the genius. It is hard to think of Rumor's family excluding the influences of a Catholicism between liberal and dusk, between intimate and dogmatic, which was the school Zanella-Fogazzaro. A curious Catholicism, where the risk of intellectual inquiry, the exploration of the soul stops in front of the fear of the devil and the bishop's admonition. [...] So, Mariano Rumor is a politician who has got a soul, a literary vocation. I bet he has got a worship, a passion for the culture as *esprit de finesse*.³

At the University of Padua, where he studied Italian Literature, Rumor attended also the lessons of the philologist and Hellenist, Manara Valgimigli (1876-1965), and the famous Latinist, Concetto Marchesi (1878-1957). After graduating with a thesis on the writer Giuseppe Giacosa,⁴ he became a High School teacher in his native city, Vicenza, but, during the Second World War, gave up the Letters to devote himself to politics: “to serve, even as a teacher, the Republic of Mussolini, was for me a betrayal of my anti-Fascism”.⁵ He therefore took part, beside the Catholic partisan, Gavino Sabadin, in writing the booklet *Essence and Program of the Christian Democracy*, a fundamental text in the party political genesis.⁶ His ascent to the top of Christian Democracy came gradually, step by step: he began in fact as local counsellor in Vicenza, then became provincial President of the ACLI, a Catholic trade union founded in 1944; in 1946, he was elected to the Constituent Assembly, then re-elected in all the legislatures at the Chamber of Deputies. Rumor

³ G. De Rosa, *La storia che non passa. Diario politico, 1968-1989* (edited by S. Demofonti), Soveria Mannelli (Cz): Rubbettino, 1999, pp. 32-33. The writer A. Fogazzaro fell under the Church's axe aimed to defeat and eradicate the Modernist doctrine.

⁴ The thesis was then re-elaborated and published: M. Rumor, *Giuseppe Giacosa. Saggio*, Florence: Olschki, 1939.

⁵ M. Rumor, *Memorie (1943-1970)*, edited by E. Reato and F. Malgeri, Vicenza: Ed. Veneta, 2003, p. 37.

⁶ The text can be found in *Mariano Rumor. Discorsi sulla Democrazia Cristiana*, introduced and edited by C. Ciscato, Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2010, pp. 60-87.

was able to alternate his participation to several Italian governments with an intense party activity: in 1950-51, he was appointed DC vice-Secretary, and repeated the experience from 1954 to 1959, during Amintore Fanfani's Secretariat. In December 1954, in fact, when the party faction called "Democratic Initiative" won the majority at the DC national Congress of Naples, Rumor became Fanfani's Deputy, keeping that strategic office until the spring 1959.

Rumor, moving his first steps within the DC, was close both to Alcide De Gasperi (1881-1954), the party historic leader who always Rumor considered a master, and to Fanfani (1908-1999), the surging star and probable successor of the Italian statesman.⁷ In 1967, in view of the US Vice-President Hubert Humphrey's trip to Italy, the State Department mentioned Fanfani as the most important politician in the country, but at the same time one of the most controversial figures, because for his ambition and contradictory political choices. Fanfani was certainly intelligent and tireless politician, a man of great organizing ability and oratorical skills—with a biting tongue—but it is true that he did not inspire trust or affection and had no scruples in promoting himself.⁸ Next to Fanfani, another first-rank politician was Aldo Moro, who would become several times Prime Minister in the Sixties, depicted as a convinced Europeanist and Atlantist: Moro was a man of great patience, legendary for the obscurity of his ideas, "his ability to say nothing in many words", with his pleonastic speeches, full of neologisms, a "genius for compromise, for yielding where necessary but remaining firm and consistent on basic principles".⁹ Moro has been depicted by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., as a "high-minded talker, over-flowing with abstractions and clichés, poor on television and apparently incapable of exciting the imagination or enlisting the enthusiasm of the youth, the intellectuals or the workers".¹⁰ Moro, all along this work, will appear constantly beside to

⁷ The same Nixon had words of praise for De Gasperi, in R. Nixon, *Leaders*, New York: Touchstone, 1990, pp. 251-259.

⁸ See Fanfani's profile from British sources in NA, FCO 33/3203.

⁹ Aldo Moro's descriptions are in KPL, National Security Files - Countries, b. 120, Airgram A-890, G.F. Reinhardt to Washington, May 26, 1962, p. 4; NA, FCO 33/1091, "Italy: Annual Review for 1969", January 16, 1970; Nara, Rg 59, Bureau of European Affairs. Office of Western European Affairs. Records relating to Italy and Switzerland, 1946-1978, box 2, "The Vice President's Visit to Europe", "Background Briefing - Italy"; to understand Moro's thought, cfr. G. Campanini, *Aldo Moro. Cultura e impegno politico*, Rome: Studium, 1992.

¹⁰ JPL, National security File - Country File - Italy, b. 196, Airgram A-953, April 23, 1964.

Rumor, and sometimes he overshadowed him thanks to his ability as a consummate politician.

The third important politician at that historic moment was the President of the Republic, the lay Social Democrat Giuseppe Saragat (1898-1988), described as “one of the most influent friends of the United States in Italy and a strong supporter of the Atlantic Alliance”. Saragat was well known and appreciated in Washington since the early Sixties, as the man who had acted as intermediary between the Socialist leader, Nenni, and the DC, “consistently aggressively pro-democratic and pro-American”, anti-Fascist and anti-Communist.¹¹ A US Memorandum of the period depicted Rumor as “the leader of the majority party and very probably a future Prime Minister”,¹² a man who, in the late Sixties and early Seventies, rose on the Italian political scene as one of the major leaders, able to lead five different governments in those difficult years of economic crisis, rapid transformation of society and growth of the Communist party. Kissinger, the most influential man among Nixon’s close staff, with few but sharp words, also described the three major Italian DC leaders of the fifth Republican legislature (1968-1972), who alternated in the chair of Prime Minister. For Kissinger, Rumor appeared to be a politician who “exuded friendliness, goodwill, indeed eagerness to please”; he was a manager of the party machine, a man who gave his best when it was necessary to cool the temperature, making himself available to the different, quarrelsome party factions. Emilio Colombo, in contrast, for long years Minister of Treasury, was an intellectual, “polite, thoughtful, more of an expert than a leader”. Moro, in the end, seemed “the most formidable. He was as intelligent as he was taciturn; he had a reputation of superb intelligence”. “He was—according to Kissinger—the party strategist par excellence, destined to devise with extraordinary subtlety new outlets in terms of internal policy”.¹³ In December 1968, when Rumor first assumed the Italian Premiership, the *New York Times* portrayed him as a skilful politician, who had come out from Catholic Action, and who—for all his

¹¹ KPL, National Security Files - Countries, b. 120A, Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy, August 9, 1962; other descriptions in A.M. Schlesinger, Jr. Papers, b. WH-12; see also F. Fornaro, *Giuseppe Saragat*, Venice: Marsilio, 2003, chap. 6.

¹² Nara, Rg 59, CFPF 1967-1969, box 2233, Memorandum for the President, September 22, 1967.

¹³ Kissinger, *The White House Years*, p. 101. The same impressions were reported by Ambassador Ortona, who described Moro to Gaja in May 1970 as a diligent and meditative politician, with an iron resistance, “united to a style of great dignity and to a very skilled ability of manoeuvring”: E. Ortona, *Anni d’America*, vol. 3, *La cooperazione 1967/1975*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1989, p. 228.

unquestionable talent—had been chosen by De Gasperi for important roles within the party.¹⁴ In 1969, the same newspaper defined him as a “bachelor whose entire soul is focused on the theory and practise of politics”, while the *Los Angeles Times* as “a faithful Roman Catholic”, a “laconic bachelor in a land where family is still the supreme value”, provided with incredible capacities of negotiation.¹⁵ Rumor, in Washington, was supported also by Ambassador Ortona, who praised him as a politician “vivid, concise, and clever in presenting the problems”.¹⁶ In 1973, British diplomats in Rome confirmed this analysis, defining him as “a shrewd and skilful negotiator”, “much attached to his family”, a man who—like Moro—used a language full of abstractions and the broadest intellectual generalizations.¹⁷

1967 was a successful year for Rumor, a year in which the party national Congress and the important visit to the United States consecrated him as Moro’s true successor to the office of Prime Minister. On February 13, 1967—forecasting Rumor’s visit to the United States—Wells Stabler, the “Country Director” of the Division Italy-Switzerland-Austria within the State Department’s Bureau of European Affairs, informed Harold H. Hutson, provost of the American University in Washington, that the DC Secretary boasted a long political militancy and carried political weight in Italy, because had already been appointed Minister of Agriculture and Forests from 1959 to 1963 and, since January 1964, was seated in the chair of the Italian major party’s Secretariat, that was a real “spring board to the seat of Prime Minister”. The office of DC Secretary was considered even more important than that of Prime Minister: so, it is symptomatic that, in December 1973, British diplomats wrote with a bit of surprise that Rumor—at the moment Head of Government—had been “received” by the party Secretary, the “arch-King-maker” Fanfani, to discuss about the economic measures to implement.¹⁸

¹⁴ “Politician All the Way - Mariano Rumor”, *The New York Times*, December 9, 1968.

¹⁵ R.C. Doty, “Italy”, *The New York Times*, July 20, 1969; “New Italian Leader Is Laconic Bachelor”, *Los Angeles Times*, December 13, 1968.

¹⁶ Ortona, *Anni d’America*, vol. 3, p. 160. Returning to Italy, Rumor sent a letter to the Administration to thank it for the warm hospitality received: Nara, Rg 59, CFPF 1967-1969, box 2234, Memorandum for H. Kissinger, April 11, 1969.

¹⁷ NA, FCO 33/2206, “Visit of Signor Rumor 8/9 December 1973”, Annex B.

¹⁸ Nara, Rg 59, Bureau of European Affairs. Office of Western European Affairs. Records relating to Italy and Switzerland, 1946-1978, box 2, “Biographic Sketch - Mariano Rumor” annex to the letter of W. Stabler to H.H. Hutson, February 13, 1967; *ivi*, Briefing Memorandum for the Secretary, October 13, 1967. See also NA, FCO 33/2198, “Italian politico/economic situation”, December 18, 1973; this

Between April and May 1967, an important meeting was held in Lucca, Tuscany, where all the DC major names gathered, along with several Ministers and men of culture, to discuss the future of the party and, more generally, the Catholic-inspired political institutions in the renewing spirit of the Vatican Council II. During the congress, numerous interventions—some of which were very conceptual and quite difficult to be translated into policy—warmed the public, giving the impression that—really thanks to Rumor’s mastery—the different factions within the party could find a common ideological ground.¹⁹ The opening speech was committed to De Rosa, “probably the best Catholic historian in Italy”, who focused his attention upon the figure of Luigi Sturzo, the priest founder of the Popular Party in the first post-war period. The DC, explained the Campanian historian, unlike the PPI, had been created with close ties to the Catholic Church but, inside its complex body, two major political factions were distinguishable, the “integralists”, who tried to transform the party in a political extension of the Church, and the “democratic Catholics”, who conceived it as a representative political institution. With the years, the DC had been degraded into a mere electoral machine, and so, continued De Rosa, the best option for the future consisted into going back to Sturzo’s Popular Party: the DC, ultimately, had to receive electoral support for its good intentions, its ideas and its ability to realize them in the practical administration of power, not just because it presented itself as a Catholic party. At the conference of Lucca, Moro emphasized instead the party fundamental contribution to block any Communist rise to power, while Rumor explained that the DC was at the same time a mass party, and an innovative and progressive force open to the people’s needs and questions, and not a conservative and moderate party.

There is therefore—continued Rumor—the possibility of a temporary pledge characterized in a Christian sense; and hence the possibility of a Christian pledge to building a society not “Christian” *tout court*, but that tends to grow in several Christian ways. [...] It is here already implicit an essential choice of values: the refusal of violence and war; the refusal of the State-worship; the refusal of the absolute priority of the laws of Economics; the

definition of Fanfani is reported in the dispatch “The thirty-fifth Government for Italy”, Diplomatic Report 363/73, July 27, 1973, p. 2, *ivi*.

¹⁹ Nara, Rg 59, CFPF 1967-1969, box 2235, Airgram A-1034, May 12, 1967. Cfr. also F. Malgeri, *La Democrazia cristiana*, in F. Malgeri - L. Poggi (edited by), *L'Italia repubblicana nella crisi degli anni Settanta*, vol. 3, *Partiti e organizzazioni di massa*, Soveria Mannelli (Cz): Rubbettino, 2003, pp. 37-58; P. Scoppola, *La “nuova cristianità” perduta*, 2nd ed., Rome: Studium, 1986; *Il Popolo*, April 30, 1967, p. 1.