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OCI No. 5770/55

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
12 August 1955

TO: Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT: San Marino Elections of 14 August 1955

1. Offices to be filled: The 60-member Great and General Council, legislative arm of the government, which is elected every four years.

2. Parties or factions participating:

Communists, closely associated with Italian Communist Party
Socialists, pro-Communist

Christian Democrats, catholic party similar to other
Western European Christian Democrats; aided by
the Italian Christian Democratic Party

Independents, similar to Fascists but reportedly not con-
nected with the neo-Fascist Italian Social
Movement

Social Democrats, anti-Communist (running for first time),
close to Italian Social Democrats

3. Outstanding personalities in San Marino politics:

Gino Giacomini, Socialist Foreign Affairs Secretary, who
has dominated San Marino affairs for several
years

Vittorio Melloni, Communist Captain Regent

Domenico Forcellini, Socialist Captain Regent

Federico Bigi, leader of the Christian Democratic group
in the Great and General Council

Gildo Gasperoni, leader of the Communists

Valdes Franciosi, secretary of the Social Democratic Party,
a descendent of one of the founders of San Marinense
Socialism

Maria Michelotti, leader of a group which is lobbying for
woman suffrage

State Dept. review completed

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Class. Changed To: TS S C	
Auth.: HR 78-2	
Date: 22 Sept 78	By: <input type="checkbox"/>

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4. Present party strengths:

<u>Party</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Claimed Voters</u>
Communist-Socialist bloc	31	4,300
Christian Democrats	26	3,500
Independents	3	--
Social Democrats	0	200 (est)

5. Principal issues: Foremost issue is woman suffrage, opposed by the Communists in power in the face of mounting agitation in recent months. The Christian Democrats have chosen to back woman suffrage with an eye on future elections. They may hope to gain some support now by drawing attention to the hollowness of Communist protestations of equality-for-all.

Socialization of the privately owned savings bank, the Cassa di Risparmio, is another important issue. A new banking law was passed in March 1954, by the Communist-Socialist majority. This law provides that the state shall name the manager and three "public members" of the board of directors and regulate credit activities "in the public interest." The stockholders are resisting implementation of the law but with little hope of success. They fear cancellation of the government's debt to the bank and possible use of the bank for political financial transactions by the Communists.

It is not yet clear whether the Communist bloc's project for setting up an office of "president of the Republic" is to be an issue in the election.

6. Principal factors influencing the outcome: The most important factor will be the vote "imported" by both sides. Communists have swung previous elections, it is said, by importing large numbers of San Marinese miners from Belgium and France and shipyard workers from Italy. The Christian Democrats have succeeded in importing some 70 anti-Communist San Marino citizens from the United States. The present captains regent were influential in moving the election date a month ahead this year in order, it is believed, to give the Christian Democrats insufficient time to arrange for importing such votes.

The votes polled by the new Social Democratic Party can be a factor favoring either the Christian Democrats or the Communist-Socialist bloc, depending on whether they include hitherto pro-Communist Socialist votes or those which have previously gone to left-wing Christian Democrats.

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7. Background: Every six months, the 60-member Great and General Council elects two captains regent who serve as chiefs of state for that period. The Council also chooses a Council of Twelve, the highest judicial authority, as well as a congress of state, or cabinet, which holds executive powers.

Of the 14,000-15,000 residents in San Marino, less than 6,000 are voters as only adult male heads of families are franchised. The vote is denied persons who are: female, feeble-minded, prisoners, bankrupt or deprived of civil rights.

The last national elections, in 1951, went to the Communists and their allies by a margin of only 127 votes. The Communist bloc has been in power since the Fascist government fell at the end of World War II, with the exception of a short period in 1951.

Communist funds, according to the Christian Democrats, come from the Cominform and the Italian Communist Party, as well as a few wealthy individuals in Italy and San Marino who contribute to the party in return for noble titles and diplomatic commissions.

Recently, Italian Catholic Action civic committees have been attempting to help the San Marinese Christian Democrats through a postcard campaign. According to the US consul in Florence, democratic leaders in San Marino have frowned upon this activity, which they consider an interference in the republic's internal affairs.

8. Informed opinion on outcome: In view of the thin margin in last elections, informed observers believe the chances of Communist success are 50-50.

9. Significance for United States: Although San Marino has the smallest Communist Party in Western Europe, it has the dubious distinction of being the only sovereign state in the area with a Communist-dominated government. The continuance of this situation damages the prestige of the West and gives encouragement to all Communist parties. In addition, the presence of such a state within Italian borders is embarrassing to Italy's Western-oriented Christian Democratic government, and offers a place of refuge and privacy for Italian Communists, who reportedly have frequently used the area for caching arms.

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