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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

SOURCE: A usually reliable individual with good contacts in Italian Jewish circles (B).
Appraisal of Contents: 6.

The following report deals with the effect of the death of Stalin, as well as other recent international developments, on the thinking of Italian Jewish circles. The report is disseminated as background material, a link in the development of Italian Jewish opinion. It is outdated in that such opinion cannot be expected to remain static in view of more recent international developments.

1. The death of Stalin has contributed to the uncertainty which developed in Italian Jewish circles as a result of recent international events. Especially since the war, Jewish people had considered Stalin as one of the principal defenders of the Hebrew nation. They had done so in spite of their political opinions, and in spite of certain reservations about him. Italian Jews held a different opinion of Malenkov. They believed that he and his supporters represented the old Russian anti-Semitism and felt that under Malenkov's administration, the Soviet policy of anti-Semitism would be accentuated.
2. The breaking off of diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel had a more profound effect on Italian Jews than did the Slanski trial or the accusation of the Jewish physicians in Moscow. Even Jews who do not want to live in Palestine feel a certain political and moral tie with the State of Israel. The termination of diplomatic relations has been interpreted as the adoption by the USSR of an openly anti-Semitic policy. This breach of diplomatic relations, rather than prior events, changed the attitude of the majority of the Jews who previously supported the request for clemency for the Rosenbergs. Most of the Jews now feel that the Rosenbergs should be punished as enemies.
3. Anti-Soviet feeling is very strong among Orthodox Jews and those in sympathy with the present Italian Government or the Rightist opposition. Hostility toward Jewish Communists and Jews politically collaborating with the Soviets and the Satellites has increased.

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4. Communist and Communist sympathizing Jews have initiated counter-action which may have been directed by recent instructions from Moscow. The propaganda line taken by them is as follows: Even if Malenkov admits anti-Semitism, he can never promote this policy to the extent that Hitler did because it is forbidden by the Communist Party. Soviet action is not directed against the Hebrew nation as such, and therefore cannot be considered an aspect of a racial struggle. Such action is directed against the Jewish bourgeoisie and is therefore an aspect of a class struggle. Affirmation is made to Jewish circles that the Satellites will maintain diplomatic relations with Israel. It has been rumored that Jewish emigration from Iron Curtain countries will not be interrupted, but that small groups will be permitted to emigrate as before.
5. Communist counter-propaganda does not seem to have had great success among the Jews. Communist cells are, however, active.
6. Jewish commercial circles, feeling that "business is business," will reportedly refuse to allow commercial activities to be influenced by political events, in view of the possibilities offered by Iron Curtain countries.