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COUNTRY Italy/USA

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SUBJECT Meeting of Dr. Martin Luther King with Italian Leftist Personalities

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SOURCE:

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Luther King, noted Protestant negro Pastor and "leader" of the anti-racist movement in the United States, met with various leaders of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) and of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) on 18 September in Rome. In particular, King conferred with PCI Senators Velio Spano and Ugo Bartesaghi, with ~~PSI~~ Deputy Lucio Luzzato, and with Senator Paolo Vittorelli of the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (PSIUP). King discussed with the above-named politicians the program of demonstrations against segregation in the United States, which are to be organized in Italy during the months immediately ahead.

[] Comment: Given the source of the above report, we (b)(1) it with some reserve. In this connection, we noted the 1(b)(3)ptember issue of L'Unita, which reflected an article on King's private audience with Pope Paul held the preceding day. According to L'Unita, immediately after the audience, in St. Peter's Square, King stated that "Pope Paul was most clear on the fact that both he, personally and the Catholic Church support the cause of civil rights". The article also states that in a press conference held at Fiumicino Airport after the audience King said, "The Pope will shortly make a public statement on racial segregation". We have no other information at this time.

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