

ENGLISH LEARNING FOR CURIOUS MINDS



Episode #583
The Kidnapping of Aldo Moro | 55 Days of Fear
9th Dec, 2025

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Transcript

[00:00:05] Hello, hello, hello, and welcome to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English, the show where you can listen to fascinating stories and learn weird and wonderful things about the world at the same time as improving your English.

[00:00:21] I'm Alastair Budge, and today it's part two of our three-part mini-series on Gli Anni Di Piombo, The Years of Lead.

[00:00:32] In case you missed part one, we [set the scene](#)¹, reminded ourselves of some modern Italian history, talked about the various political groups involved, and the [tragic](#)² bombing at Milan's Piazza Fontana in December 1969.

[00:00:48] Today, we are going to move into the next, bloody stage: the Red Brigades and the kidnapping of Aldo Moro.

[00:00:57] And next up, we'll talk about how it all came to a close, with the bombing of the train station at Bologna, and the shadow this period still [casts](#)³ over the Italy of today.

¹ provided background information

² very sad or terrible

³ causes to appear or spread

[00:01:09] This mini-series is the sort of one that will be much easier to follow if you listen to it all in order, so just in case you haven't listened to part one yet, now is probably the time to press pause and catch up on that one.

[00:01:25] Ok, let's not waste a minute, and learn about Le Brigade Rosse, the Red Brigades.

[00:01:33] There is a quote that's often [attributed](#)⁴ to Abraham Lincoln that goes "You can please some of the people all of the time, you can please all of the people some of the time, but you can't please all of the people all of the time".

[00:01:51] As a politician, and indeed, pretty much anyone in any position of power, clearly it's true.

[00:01:58] People have different opinions and beliefs, they want different things. Sometimes these interests [overlap](#)⁵; some people may always approve of what you do, but not everyone will always agree with you.

[00:02:14] And in the deeply [fragmented](#)⁶ environment of post-war Italy, this was especially true. Communists, fascists, nationalists, the Vatican, Americans, rich, poor, north and south.

⁴ considered to have been said by

⁵ share a part

⁶ broken into many small parts or groups

[00:02:31] Finding **common ground**⁷ between all of these often competing interest groups was, well, not impossible, according to one man.

[00:02:43] Aldo Moro had been Prime Minister of Italy five times: three times during the 1960s, and twice during the 1970s.

[00:02:54] He was a senior figure within the Christian Democrat party, the centrist political party that dominated Italian politics for most of the second half of the 20th century.

[00:03:07] The second most powerful party at the time was the communist party.

[00:03:12] It had been gaining strength and popularity throughout the 1970s, and in the 1976 election — the first election after the voting age was reduced from 21 to 18 — it won 34% of the vote, only **narrowly**⁸ **trailing**⁹ the Christian Democrats' 39%.

[00:03:34] And the remaining 27% was **split**¹⁰ between smaller parties, from the neo-fascist MSI to the socialists and republicans.

⁷ ideas or opinions that different people shared

⁸ by only a small amount

⁹ being behind it

¹⁰ divided

[00:03:46] Finding any [viable](#)¹¹ majority seemed completely [unworkable](#)¹².

[00:03:52] For the Christian Democrats, this would mean working with a [coalition](#)¹³ of smaller parties with completely opposing positions.

[00:04:01] Or it would mean [getting into bed with](#)¹⁴ the communists.

[00:04:06] Again, completely [unworkable](#). The Christian Democrats, or we can just call them DC, for short, were the [continuity](#)¹⁵ party: church, family, traditional, conservative values.

[00:04:21] The communists, the Partito Comunista Italiano, or PCI for short, well, they were communists supported by Moscow.

[00:04:31] And this was the middle of the Cold War.

[00:04:34] It was never going to work. Or so most people thought.

[00:04:40] There was one person who thought it could: Aldo Moro.

¹¹ possible or able to work

¹² not possible to make happen or succeed

¹³ a group of different parties or people who would work together

¹⁴ working closely with them

¹⁵ keeping things the same over time

[00:04:45] He had been working with the leader of the communist party on something called the “historic compromise”, a way to work with the communists, making them a partner in the heart of government.

[00:05:02] This had, if it’s possible, the complete opposite effect of that Lincoln quote we started with.

[00:05:10] It pleased none of the people all the time.

[00:05:15] Moscow hated it because it brought the Italian communists closer to the West.

[00:05:20] The US hated it because it gave the communists a seat at the G7 table.

[00:05:27] Domestically, the left opposed it because it was seen as compromising on key positions, and the right opposed it for the same reason.

[00:05:38] The then US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, even had a warning for Moro, reportedly telling him, “You stop doing this thing–this collaboration–or you will be badly punished.”

[00:05:53] Moro did not stop. And he almost got there.

[00:05:58] However, on the morning of 16th March, 1978, as he was leaving for a meeting, his car was [ambushed](#)¹⁶.

¹⁶ attacked suddenly by surprise

[00:06:07] Moro was [dragged away](#)¹⁷ and held for 55 days. The [perpetrators](#)¹⁸ were Le
Brigate Rosse, the Red Brigades.

[00:06:17] Or at least, that is the official verdict.

[00:06:21] The episode has gone down as the darkest in the years of lead, the
kidnapping of one of the country's longest serving leaders [in broad daylight](#)¹⁹, and has
been called Italy's 9/11 moment.

[00:06:37] It is also to this day the subject of [controversy](#)²⁰ and [intrigue](#)²¹, with many
theories suggesting that the official [verdict](#)²² may be [omitting](#)²³ the influence of
everyone from the CIA, the Stasi, the KGB, Mossad, Palestinians, Masonic Lodges, and
even the Mafia.

[00:06:59] So, let's return to that morning of March 16th, 1978, the day now
remembered as the day of the strage di via Fani — the Via Fani massacre.

¹⁷ pulled away by force

¹⁸ people who did the crime

¹⁹ during the day when everyone could see

²⁰ strong disagreement

²¹ interest caused by mystery

²² final decision or judgement about it

²³ leaving out or not including it

[00:07:14] Moro's car was on its way through a quiet Roman street when, at 9 am, a Fiat 128 **blocked**²⁴ the **convoy**²⁵.

[00:07:24] A group of armed Red Brigades members, **disguised**²⁶ as Alitalia crew members, jumped out.

[00:07:32] Within seconds, gunfire **erupted**²⁷.

[00:07:36] Ninety-one shots in less than two minutes.

[00:07:40] When it all stopped, all five of Moro's **bodyguards**²⁸ were dead.

[00:07:46] Moro himself was **bundled**²⁹ into a waiting car.

[00:07:51] It was an attack carried out with **chilling**³⁰ **precision**³¹.

²⁴ stopped it from moving forward

²⁵ the group of vehicles moving together

²⁶ made to look like

²⁷ started suddenly and violently

²⁸ people whose job was to protect him

²⁹ pushed or pulled quickly and roughly

³⁰ making you feel afraid or shocked

³¹ being exact and careful

[00:07:56] The Red Brigades weren't just [street thugs](#)³²; they were a highly organised terrorist group, with [cells](#)³³, weapons training, and an ideology that saw themselves as soldiers in a revolutionary war against the Italian state.

[00:08:12] A couple of days after the kidnapping, the Red Brigades released their first communication, claiming credit for Moro's kidnapping, and sending a picture proving he was still alive, the famous image of him in front of the Brigade Rosse sign.

[00:08:30] In this communication, they declared that he would be put on a "People's Trial", where he would answer the charges of his crimes against the [proletariat](#)³⁴.

[00:08:43] For the next almost two months, 55 days in total, the Red Brigades would release a series of communications, including letters written by Moro: to his political colleagues, to his wife, and even to the pope.

[00:09:01] In these letters, he [begged](#)³⁵ for a deal to be made, [pleading](#)³⁶ for his life.

³² violent criminals or bullies on the street

³³ small secret groups within the larger organisation

³⁴ working-class people; ordinary workers

³⁵ asked strongly and emotionally for it

³⁶ asking in an emotional or desperate way

[00:09:09] In them, he sounded like a broken man, terrified, [abandoned](#)³⁷, [convinced](#)³⁸ that his colleagues were sacrificing him for political principle.

[00:09:21] These communications kept the public up to date with the “trial” and their demands for Moro’s release.

[00:09:31] Initially, the kidnappers demanded the release of 13 imprisoned members of The Red Brigades, but this was later reduced to one.

[00:09:42] And this was all [played out](#)³⁹ very publicly, with the entire country watching [on tenterhooks](#)⁴⁰.

[00:09:50] And it was, of course, the subject of great debate, from the inner circles of government to the [pensioners](#)⁴¹ playing cards in the village bar: what could be done to get him home? Should the state [negotiate](#)⁴² with terrorists?

³⁷ left alone or given up on

³⁸ sure or certain about it

³⁹ happened or developed

⁴⁰ very nervous or waiting anxiously

⁴¹ people who no longer worked and got money from the government

⁴² talk to reach an agreement

[00:10:08] On one side was the so-called linea della fermezza, the “hard line,” championed by the Prime Minister, Giulio Andreotti, and his Interior Minister, Francesco Cossiga.

[00:10:21] Their position was clear: the Republic must not [bow to](#)⁴³ violence.

[00:10:27] To make a deal would only encourage more kidnappings, more bloodshed. And there was already more than enough.

[00:10:36] On the other side were those who [favoured](#)⁴⁴ the linea della trattativa, the “soft line.”

[00:10:43] They argued that Moro’s life was more important than [abstract](#)⁴⁵ principles, that saving him was worth [compromise](#)⁴⁶. Among them were several members of his own Christian Democratic Party, figures in the Socialist Party, and, of course, his desperate family.

⁴³ give in to, accept their demands

⁴⁴ supported or preferred

⁴⁵ not real or clear; more like an idea

⁴⁶ an agreement or settlement

[00:11:04] Even the Vatican tried to [intervene](#)⁴⁷. Pope Paul VI, who was a personal friend of Moro, made a [heartfelt](#)⁴⁸ public appeal: “I [beg](#)⁴⁹ you on my knees,” he said to the [kidnappers](#)⁵⁰, “give Aldo Moro back to his family, unharmed.”

[00:11:25] Yet the state’s position was clear: we will not [negotiate](#) with terrorists.

[00:11:32] While all of this was going on, there was a [frantic](#)⁵¹ search to find the [kidnappers' whereabouts](#)⁵². It was clearly a large job, with multiple people involved in the planning and execution of the [kidnapping](#)⁵³.

[00:11:46] Moro had been [snatched](#)⁵⁴ from the streets of the capital. This had been going on for almost two months, and someone, somewhere, must have heard something.

⁴⁷ come between or get involved

⁴⁸ deeply and strongly felt; sincere

⁴⁹ ask strongly and emotionally

⁵⁰ people who had taken him away by force

⁵¹ very worried and intense

⁵² the place where they were

⁵³ the act of taking him away by force

⁵⁴ taken quickly and suddenly

[00:11:58] The police looked for [clues⁵⁵](#) in Moro's letters, thinking he might have left hidden secret messages beneath the innocent-looking words.

[00:12:08] Whatever [tip⁵⁶](#) the authorities followed, it led to nothing.

[00:12:12] And as the days went by, the so-called "People's Trial" came to a close.

[00:12:20] In their ninth and final communication, the Red Brigades announced that Aldo Moro had been found guilty and would be sentenced [accordingly⁵⁷](#). In other words, he was about to be executed.

[00:12:35] Still, the state remained [resolute⁵⁸](#). It did nothing. Its policy was clear: we do not [negotiate](#) with terrorists.

[00:12:46] And on the 9th of May 1978, the waiting came to an end.

[00:12:53] Moro's trusted assistant, Francesco Tritto, received a phone call from a man who said he was from The Red Brigades.

[00:13:02] Moro was dead, he told him.

⁵⁵ small pieces of information

⁵⁶ secret or useful information

⁵⁷ in a way that was appropriate to the particular circumstances

⁵⁸ firm and not changing their mind

[00:13:05] Go to via Caetani in central Rome. There's a red Renault. Look in the [boot](#)⁵⁹.

You'll find him there.

[00:13:13] The police [rushed](#)⁶⁰ to the scene. They opened the boot and found Moro's lifeless body, still wearing the suit he had been kidnapped in.

[00:13:25] The location had been chosen with [deliberate](#)⁶¹ [cruelty](#)⁶²: halfway between the headquarters of the Christian Democrats and those of the Communist Party, as if to symbolise the death of Moro's dream of compromise.

[00:13:41] The shock was [immense](#)⁶³.

[00:13:44] Leaders of all parties [condemned](#)⁶⁴ the murder. Italians [wept](#)⁶⁵ in the streets.

⁵⁹ the back part of the car where luggage was kept

⁶⁰ went there quickly

⁶¹ done on purpose

⁶² being unkind or causing pain on purpose

⁶³ very great

⁶⁴ said strongly that it was wrong or bad

⁶⁵ cried

[00:13:51] There were offers of a state [funeral](#)⁶⁶, but in a very public statement against a country they felt had [abandoned](#) him, his family refused, instead opting for a private [funeral](#), to which no politicians were invited.

[00:14:07] And there, the grief was mixed with [fury](#)⁶⁷; [fury](#) at the Red Brigades, [fury](#) at the state's refusal to [negotiate](#), [fury](#) at the sense that something essential had died along with him.

[00:14:22] And for the Red Brigades, even though they might have achieved their [stated](#)⁶⁸ goal by putting Aldo Moro on [trial](#)⁶⁹ and [humiliating](#)⁷⁰ the state, this whole [saga](#)⁷¹ would be a disaster.

[00:14:37] After killing Moro, they lost all public sympathy, even among radical workers and students, people who may have shared some similar political ideologies but who saw kidnapping and murder as entirely [beyond the pale](#)⁷², utterly unjustified.

⁶⁶ a ceremony for burying his body

⁶⁷ strong anger

⁶⁸ said clearly

⁶⁹ a formal examination to decide if he was guilty

⁷⁰ making them feel very embarrassed or ashamed

⁷¹ long story with many events or problems

⁷² completely unacceptable

[00:14:57] The communist party **denounced**⁷³ them outright; the left turned its back.

[00:15:03] The state was **galvanised**⁷⁴ to crush them, and within three years, 32 members of the Red Brigades, including most of its leadership, were **convicted**⁷⁵ and sentenced to life imprisonment for their role in the Moro affair.

[00:15:19] And Aldo Moro's dream of the "historic compromise", well, without its key architect and **proponent**⁷⁶, it was **out of the window**⁷⁷.

[00:15:30] But not everyone lost out from the affair.

[00:15:36] For the Christian Democrats, especially the right of the party, it meant continuity, a continuation of the system that Moro had been pushing to change, as well as greater public support for a **crackdown**⁷⁸ against left-wing extremism.

[00:15:53] This also **played out** nicely for Italy's Western allies, who had been fearful of communists getting a seat at the table, as Moro had been proposing.

⁷³ said publicly that they were bad or wrong

⁷⁴ made to suddenly take action

⁷⁵ found guilty of crimes in court

⁷⁶ supporter

⁷⁷ no longer possible

⁷⁸ strong action to stop or control it

[00:16:05] And domestically, anyone who opposed communism probably also benefited, whether this was elements of Masonic Lodges such as the infamous P2 [P2 in English], or even the mafia.

[00:16:21] And, like in Piazza Fontana and the Bologna bombing that we'll talk about in the next episode, this has [given rise to](#)⁷⁹ theories that the official explanation might not be telling the whole story.

[00:16:37] In the case of Aldo Moro, there are many things that don't add up, and some that are just plain [weird](#)⁸⁰.

[00:16:46] There was a [séance](#)⁸¹, of all things, a kind of spiritual meeting where people try to communicate with the dead. This was held by a group of professors at the University of Rome, who claimed to receive messages from the beyond about Moro's location.

[00:17:06] Absurd as it sounds, their [cryptic](#)⁸² clues were actually passed to the police, and some of them eerily pointed to places connected with the kidnapping.

⁷⁹ caused them to happen

⁸⁰ strange or unusual

⁸¹ a meeting where people try to talk to the dead

⁸² mysterious or hard to understand

[00:17:19] So you either believe in the supernatural, or you believe that this was a way for someone to pass information “unofficially” to the police.

[00:17:30] And one of the people at this [séance](#) was Romano Prodi, a name you may remember because he has served twice as Italian Prime Minister, in the late 1990s and late 2000s.

[00:17:45] What’s more, there were reports of missed opportunities, [bungled](#)⁸³ searches, and phone calls that were ignored.

[00:17:53] It would later turn out that Moro never left Rome, yet somehow the Italian police, with all their resources, never found him, even though they [raided](#)⁸⁴ hundreds of apartments.

[00:18:06] How could the kidnappers have moved him around a city [swarming with](#)⁸⁵ checkpoints and surveillance?

[00:18:14] And then there’s the international angle.

[00:18:16] Some accounts suggest that foreign intelligence agencies, the CIA, the KGB, and even the Stasi, all had their eyes on Italy at the time.

⁸³ done badly or with mistakes

⁸⁴ entered suddenly

⁸⁵ full of

[00:18:28] A Communist party joining the government of a NATO country was unthinkable to Washington.

[00:18:34] To Moscow, the compromise looked like betrayal. Did these superpowers have an interest in seeing Moro silenced?

[00:18:45] There are no definitive answers.

[00:18:47] And that's exactly the point. The kidnapping of Aldo Moro remains an open wound in Italy because the official story leaves too many gaps.

[00:18:59] When the state cannot, or will not, explain fully what happened, conspiracy theories rush in to [fill the void](#)⁸⁶.

[00:19:07] And to this day, the kidnapping and murder of Aldo Moro remain one of the darkest chapters in modern Italian history. Not just because of the violence, but because of the questions that still [linger](#)⁸⁷.

[00:19:22] Did the government really do all it could to save him?

[00:19:26] Did foreign powers play a hidden role?

⁸⁶ replace what is missing

⁸⁷ stay for a long time

[00:19:29] Was the state itself [complicit](#)⁸⁸ in letting him die to prevent the Communists from entering power?

[00:19:36] In all likelihood, the full truth will never come to light. But what is certain is that Moro's death marked something of a turning point in the Years of Lead.

[00:19:48] And just two years later, Italy would be shaken again by an [atrocity](#)⁸⁹ deadlier than anything that had come before, the bombing of Bologna train station in 1980, an attack that remains the worst act of terrorism in Italian history.

[00:20:06] And that, my friends, is what we'll explore in the third and final part of this mini-series.

[00:20:14] OK, then, that is it for today's episode on the kidnapping of Aldo Moro.

[00:20:19] I hope it's been an interesting one and that you've learnt something new.

[00:20:22] As always, I would love to know what you thought of this episode. Italy is one of our most popular countries, and this was not even 50 years ago.

[00:20:31] So, for the Italians, or indeed anyone, who might remember this period. What are your memories of it from the time, and how do you remember it now, looking back on it five decades later?

⁸⁸ helping or involved in

⁸⁹ a very cruel or violent act

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[00:20:44] I would love to know, so let's get this discussion started.

[00:20:47] You can head right into our community forum, which is at
community.leonardoenglish.com and get chatting away to other curious minds.

[00:20:56] You've been listening to English Learning for Curious Minds by Leonardo
English.

[00:21:01] I'm Alastair Budge, you stay safe, and I'll catch you in the next episode.

[END OF EPISODE]

Key vocabulary

Word	Definition
Set the scene	provided background information
Tragic	very sad or terrible
Casts	causes to appear or spread
Attributed	considered to have been said by
Overlap	share a part
Fragmented	broken into many small parts or groups
Common ground	ideas or opinions that different people shared
Narrowly	by only a small amount
Trailing	being behind it
Split	divided
Viable	possible or able to work
Unworkable	not possible to make happen or succeed
Coalition	a group of different parties or people who would work together

Getting into bed with	working closely with them
Continuity	keeping things the same over time
Ambushed	attacked suddenly by surprise
Dragged away	pulled away by force
Perpetrators	people who did the crime
In broad daylight	during the day when everyone could see
Controversy	strong disagreement
Intrigue	interest caused by mystery
Verdict	final decision or judgement about it
Omitting	leaving out or not including it
Blocked	stopped it from moving forward
Convoy	the group of vehicles moving together
Disguised	made to look like
Erupted	started suddenly and violently
Bodyguards	people whose job was to protect him

Bundled	pushed or pulled quickly and roughly
Chilling	making you feel afraid or shocked
Precision	being exact and careful
Street thugs	violent criminals or bullies on the street
Cells	small secret groups within the larger organisation
Proletariat	working-class people; ordinary workers
Begged	asked strongly and emotionally for it
Pleading	asking in an emotional or desperate way
Abandoned	left alone or given up on
Convinced	sure or certain about it
Played out	happened or developed
On tenterhooks	very nervous or waiting anxiously
Pensioners	people who no longer worked and got money from the government
Negotiate	talk to reach an agreement
Bow to	give in to, accept their demands

Favoured	supported or preferred
Abstract	not real or clear; more like an idea
Compromise	an agreement or settlement
Intervene	come between or get involved
Heartfelt	deeply and strongly felt; sincere
Beg	ask strongly and emotionally
Kidnappers	people who had taken him away by force
Frantic	very worried and intense
Whereabouts	the place where they were
Kidnapping	the act of taking him away by force
Snatched	taken quickly and suddenly
Clues	small pieces of information
Tip	secret or useful information
Accordingly	in a way that was appropriate to the particular circumstances
Resolute	firm and not changing their mind

Boot the back part of the car where luggage was kept

Rushed went there quickly

Deliberate done on purpose

Cruelty being unkind or causing pain on purpose

Immense very great

Condemned said strongly that it was wrong or bad

Wept cried

Funeral a ceremony for burying his body

Fury strong anger

Stated said clearly

Trial a formal examination to decide if he was guilty

Humiliating making them feel very embarrassed or ashamed

Saga long story with many events or problems

Beyond the pale completely unacceptable

Denounced said publicly that they were bad or wrong

Galvanised	made to suddenly take action
Convicted	found guilty of crimes in court
Proponent	supporter
Out of the window	no longer possible
Crackdown	strong action to stop or control it
Given rise to	caused them to happen
Weird	strange or unusual
Séance	a meeting where people try to talk to the dead
Cryptic	mysterious or hard to understand
Bungled	done badly or with mistakes
Raided	entered suddenly
Swarming with	full of
Fill the void	replace what is missing
Linger	stay for a long time
Complicit	helping or involved in

Atrocity

a very cruel or violent act

Language spotlight

1. Get into bed with (someone)

- **Meaning:** To work closely with someone you normally disagree with or don't trust, usually for practical or political reasons.
- **Synonyms:** cooperate with, team up with, join forces with
- **Antonyms:** avoid, reject, stay independent from
- **Examples:**
 - Many politicians were shocked when the party decided to **get into bed with** its long-time rivals.
 - The company had to **get into bed with** a bigger competitor in order to survive the crisis.

2. Bow to (something/someone)

- **Meaning:** To accept someone's demands or pressure, even if you don't want to.
- **Synonyms:** give in to, surrender to, yield to
- **Antonyms:** resist, stand firm, refuse

- **Examples:**

- The government refused to **bow to** the kidnappers' demands.
- After hours of negotiation, the team finally **bowed to** public pressure and changed their plan.

3. Out of the window

- **Meaning:** Gone, lost, or no longer possible; something that can no longer happen.
- **Synonyms:** finished, gone, ruined
- **Antonyms:** still possible, still in place, intact
- **Examples:**
 - After the scandal, the minister's career was basically **out of the window**.
 - Once the deadline passed, their chance of winning the contract went **out of the window**.

4. Played out

- **Meaning:** To develop or happen over time, often in a dramatic or emotional way.
- **Synonyms:** unfolded, developed, took place
- **Antonyms:** stopped suddenly, never happened
- **Examples:**
 - The crisis **played out** on live television, keeping the whole country watching.
 - No one knew how the argument would **play out**, but everyone expected trouble.

5. Beyond the pale

- **Meaning:** Completely unacceptable or shocking behaviour.
- **Synonyms:** unacceptable, disgraceful, outrageous
- **Antonyms:** acceptable, reasonable, appropriate
- **Examples:**
 - Even supporters of the group said the kidnapping was **beyond the pale**.

- His comments about the victims were **beyond the pale**, and many people demanded an apology.

Quiz

Listening Comprehension Multiple Choice Questions

1. What was Aldo Moro working on with the leader of the Communist Party?
 - a) A plan to remove the Christian Democrats from power
 - b) A deal to join NATO
 - c) The “historic compromise”
 - d) A proposal to raise the voting age

2. How did the murder of Aldo Moro affect Italian politics?
 - a) It made the Communist Party stronger
 - b) It brought all political parties together in unity
 - c) It caused anger, mistrust, and long-lasting political division
 - d) It ended terrorism in Italy completely

3. What did the Red Brigades say they would do with Moro after the kidnapping?
 - a) Send him to Moscow

- b) Put him on a “People’s Trial”
- c) Release him immediately
- d) Make him give a public speech

4. What was the government’s official position during the kidnapping?

- a) Negotiate with the kidnappers
- b) Pretend nothing was happening
- c) Ask the United Nations for help
- d) Refuse to negotiate with terrorists

5. Where was Moro’s body found?

- a) In the boot of a car on via Caetani
- b) In a church courtyard
- c) Outside his house
- d) In a Red Brigades hideout in the mountains

True or False

6. The Communist Party won more votes than the Christian Democrats in the 1976 election. (True/False)
7. The kidnappers first demanded the release of 13 Red Brigades members. (True/False)
8. Pope Paul VI publicly asked the kidnappers to release Moro. (True/False)
9. The Red Brigades released Moro after receiving a large ransom from the Italian government. (True/False)
10. Some people believed foreign intelligence services might have been involved. (True/False)

Fill-in-the-Blank

11. Finding common _____ between all of these often competing interest groups was, well, not impossible, according to one man.
12. The episode has gone down as the darkest in the years of lead, the kidnapping of one of the country's longest serving leaders in _____ daylight.
13. This was all played out very publicly, with the entire country watching _____ tenterhooks.

14. And Aldo Moro's dream of the "historic compromise", well, without its key architect and proponent, it was out of the _____.

15. When the state cannot, or will not, explain fully what happened, conspiracy theories rush in to fill the _____.

Vocabulary Practice

Choose the best definition of the bolded word/expression as used in the podcast.

16. "The Red Brigades carried out the attack with chilling **precision**."

a) Fear

b) Exactness

c) Noise

d) Bravery

17. "The state remained **resolute**."

a) Unsure

b) Very weak

c) Firm and determined

d) Confused

18. "Public opinion was left **on tenterhooks**."

a) Feeling very relaxed

b) Feeling very worried and waiting

c) Feeling angry at politicians

d) Feeling bored

19. "Some clues were strange and even **cryptic**."

a) Easy to see

b) Funny

c) Mysterious or hard to understand

d) Very old

20. "The murder of Moro was seen as an **atrocity**."

a) A very bad or violent act

- b) A small mistake
- c) A peaceful event
- d) A new law

Answers

1. c) The “historic compromise”
2. c) It caused anger, mistrust, and long-lasting political division
3. b) Put him on a “People’s Trial”
4. d) Refuse to negotiate with terrorists
5. a) In the boot of a car on via Caetani
6. False
7. True
8. True
9. False
10. True
11. ground
12. broad
13. on
14. window
15. void
16. b) Exactness
17. c) Firm and determined
18. b) Feeling very worried and waiting
19. c) Mysterious or hard to understand
20. a) A very bad or violent act