

italy

FIAT: Capitalists Push Fascist Version of "Social Salary"

July 27 (IPS) — As the worldwide auto industry begins to crack under the increasing pressure of the depression, FIAT owner Gianni Agnelli is moving fast to consolidate his business and extend it outside of Italy, particularly into West Germany and France. One feature of this consolidation is the cut-back in auto production and the reconversion of part of his industry into production of trucks and other heavy machinery. The main obstacle to Agnelli's plans at present is workers' resistance to being relocated in other plants in the same region or more importantly, in other regions, particularly Southern Italy. To counter this, FIAT, Montedison, ENI (Italian Petroleum Agency) and IRI (Institute of Industrial Reconstruction) are developing a program of attack against trade union resistance.

Agnelli the "Socialist"

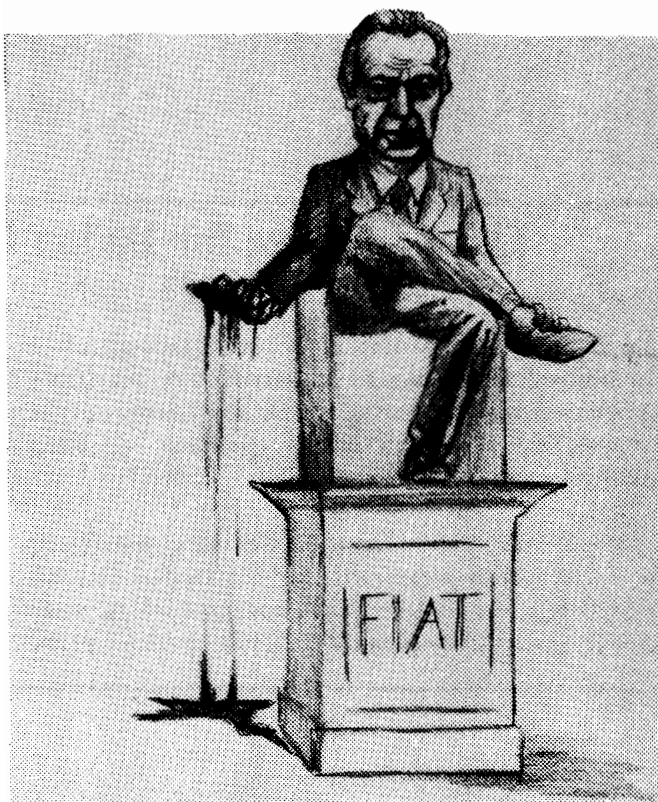
To develop the basis for a corporatist economy, Agnelli has been billed by the press, especially in the past two months, as a "socialist" industrialist who is concerned about the fate of the working class on the basis of what he has suddenly discovered to be the "common interest between enterprises and workers." In this context, he has established a "constructive dialogue" with the unions in which new ways of collaboration between workers and industrialists could be sought. Two issues are currently being examined: the guaranteed salary and "social salary." Against the background of the depression, these two gimmicks will play a major role.

For some time the unions have been emphasizing the demand of the guaranteed salary, and more recently that of "social salary." Industries are willing to talk about these issues only under one condition: that the unions allow the companies to relocate the workers around the country — a Schachtian economic measure touted by industry as "mobility of labor." This means that workers would constitute a vast labor pool for capitalist use wherever and whenever the need arose.

Social Salary Turned Into Divisive Localism

The question of social salary stems from a fundamental condition of Italian life: the miserable state of public services — transportation, schools, hospitals, etc. "Socialist" Agnelli is doing something about it. He is providing the necessary tools — local control and co-

participation — by which workers will be directed towards social suicide. Social salary consists of a fund which the company deposits on account for future use on public services. Accordingly, FIAT is going to build a fund equal to 0.8% of the total yearly wages paid to be invested in "public" transportation. Additionally, 0.1% of the total wages would be invested in day care services. The hitch to this hoax is the fact that **these investments would be made in those areas where new installations are to be located.**



Thus, Agnelli's plan would achieve his two immediate goals. First, despite the generalized collapse of municipal transportation systems, he is assuring that "his" workers can report for daily work. Second, such proposals tend to reinforce the anarcho-syndicalist tendency in the class by transmuted issues of classwide concern into localized pseudo-solutions of immediate needs. Two-thirds of the fund's managing commission would be composed of workers' representatives.

Agnelli's Allies

The program is also being pushed by Giuseppe Petrilli, president of IRI. IRI is a multimillion dollar public holding that was formed during the 1930s, under Mussolini. It consolidated by gobbling up the vast numbers of smaller industries which collapsed in the last Great Depression. Today, IRI is one of the four major entities responsible for planning large-scale fascist development projects in Southern Italy, the Italian version of the U.S. Rocky Mountain slave-labor projects.

IRI is behind another proposal: the elimination of national contract negotiations with unions. IRI claims that, since whatever the national contract calls for is usually modified regionally and locally, thus negating the clout of national contract, the "obvious" conclusion is that there is no need for a nationwide contract. According to Petrilli, a "non-written [gentleman's] accord" should be reached with the unions. He adds the ironic proviso: "in so much as it does not violate the reciprocal autonomy of both parts."

Petrilli backs up his proposals by threateningly urging the unions to act now "before the possibility that in the

fall a raging devaluation of the lira or mass unemployment render impossible or perhaps even useless any negotiations." Umberto Agnelli, ex-playboy Gianni's brother, is more open in his blackmail of the unions. In one of his "dialogues" with union representatives he declared: "Either you [the unions] support the 'mobility of labor' clause, or there will be 100,000 unemployed by next fall" (20,000 workers in auto and 80,000 in related industries).

Petrilli Seeks Government Support

In order to implement his programs, Petrilli suggests that the government intervene and exercise its dutiful rights by participating in the solution of problems proper to government activity, such as defense of employment, creation of social services, and the "mobility of the working class." This is the clarion call for legislation of the Italian version of social fascist Senator Mondale's bill before the U.S. Congress, which calls for the legalization of massive relocation of workers into slave-labor projects.

ELC Campaign for Italian Debt Moratorium Splits PSI

July 23 (IPS) — The impact of the European Labor Committees' organizing for a moratorium on Italy's foreign debt is already being felt all over Europe, as the following excerpt from today's *Quotidien de Paris* testifies:

"Mr. Zoccali, a member of the Central Committee of the FGSI, youth organization of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI), was demoted and brought back to rank-and-file status during the July 20-21 session of the

leadership of that organization.

"Mr. Zoccali had supported the idea of a moratorium on the Italian foreign debt, a measure advocated by the 'ultra-leftist' (gauchiste) European Labor Committee (ELC)."

July 25, Mr. Zoccali will give a press conference in Rome. He will announce the formation of a tendency within the PSI/FGSI whose purpose will be to further the cause of "all left sources united for socialism."
