



Special Report

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The Italian Earthquake Didn't Just Happen

May 14 (IPS) — Mounting scientific and other evidence points to the fact that the series of earthquakes which devastated the Friuli region of northeastern Italy, killing over 800 persons, injuring over 3,000 and leaving 100,000 homeless, was an "artificial" "natural" disaster, created and maintained by NATO. While at the present time there is only circumstantial evidence that NATO agencies directly created the earthquake itself, the fact is that the earthquake had been predicted by Italian seismologists, and no preparatory measures or even warnings were undertaken. Following the quake, the "relief" measures implemented were purposefully inadequate, designed rather to maximize the psychological impact and social destabilization of the regions affected. This artificial "natural" disaster is being used by Rockefeller-Agnelli as a pretext to militarize Italy under direct NATO control, while simultaneously discrediting the existing republican institutions as incapable of appropriate action.

The May 9 Washington Post, together with leading Italian press, reported that the Italian seismologist Raffaele Bbandi had predicted that the earthquake would occur. This capability to accurately determine the strength, time and place of an earthquake has only recently been developed, as noted in a September 1, 1975 Time magazine cover story on forecasting of earthquakes. Yet, with the information before them, the appropriate authorities failed to take any preparatory measures, or to warn the population in any way.

Suspicious Circumstances

The United States and associated NATO agencies have invested large sums in developing the capability for either creating or manipulating earthquakes. The research has been so extensive that, according to Science Magazine, virtually every earthquake seismologist in the U.S. has conducted work for the Defense Department. And a large portion of this work has been carried out under the direction of the Rockefeller controlled Rand Corporation.

While it is highly unlikely that the more direct method of catalyzing an earthquake through the detonation of underground nuclear explosions was utilized, (given the relative ease with which it could be detected), the following circumstantial evidence suggesting that method does exist:

*The Italian press has carried reports of NATO seismic

experiments with nuclear underground explosions in Sardinia.

*A leading Italian political figure, currently in the hospital following an attempt on his life, reported that he had heard rumors of nuclear underground explosions in Friuli, but at the time "he didn't believe them."

*Reports in the Polish and Mexican press and statements by several leading geologists indicate there was a direct connection between the U.S. Colorado underground nuclear tests and the devastating Guatemala earthquake. The USLP R and D Staff will be conducting a full investigation of this "covert" use of nuclear weapons capability.

Because the earthquake was predicted, it is far more likely that, if NATO did create or manipulate the Friuli earthquake, the more sophisticated method of injecting fluids under high pressure into the ground was utilized. While according to the open literature this method has only been tentatively demonstrated experimentally (in the Rangely Chevron Oil Field experiments carried out in the late 1960's), the extensive research on this technology conducted by the Lawrence Livermore* Weapons Laboratory under the direction of Dr. Edward Teller — ostensibly for the development of in situ gassification of coal — points toward a fully operational capability. In a situation where the potential for an earthquake is known to exist, it is quite feasible that this method would provide the means for setting it off.

The circumstantial evidence pointing to this is the following:

*According to Italian press reports, including the daily Corriere della Sera of the week preceding the quake, mysterious oil drilling operations were conducted in the Friuli region by unidentified persons, or organizations.

*Italian radio reported May 7-8 that the U.S. Navy was conducting oceanographic research in the northern Adriatic which is adjacent to the Friuli region. Shipping was cordoned off from the area. Mr. Robinson of the U.S. Naval Oceanographic Office of Research categorically denied that any of the navies' 12 oceanographic research ships were in the Adriatic before, during, or after the earthquake. In recent years with the development of offshore oil drilling technology, the ability to drill thousands of feet beneath the Ocean bottom has been fully realized.

Grid of Political Developments Surrounding Friuli Disaster

One thing is absolutely certain: If Vice-President Nelson Rockefeller, Fiat owner Gianni Agnelli and their henchmen were actually able to order artificially-induced earthquakes, they would have ordered one for Italy precisely at the time that the Friuli disaster took place. The "disaster" was perfectly coherent with interests of these Atlanticists.

In late April, NATO press and other policy conduits began to clearly signal the activation of a military coup d'etat operation for resolving the issue of whether Italy would or would not pay its enormous debt to the New York commercial banks. By April 24, the appearance of such code-phrases as "state crisis" and "NATO code" had become so

frequent in the Italian coverage of leading European newspapers, that the presidential candidate of the U.S. Labor Party Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., issued an unqualified warning that "some Lower Manhattan financial circles" aligned "with Italy's Gianni Agnelli are now in a count down for a mooted 'military solution' to the current crisis in Italy."

By April 29-30, major cities like Milan and Rome had become the scenes of staged violent clashes between NATO and CIA-controlled countergangs of the "left" and "right." Agnelli-controlled press outlets began predicting "major violence" on May Day as a result of the tensions and conflicting demonstration scheduled by the working class and the fascist MSI. On April 30, both Milan and Rome were flooded with "carabineiri" special police, and Agnelli conduits demanded that paramilitary control be extended nationally.

In the first week of May, the first of three separate NATO maneuvers on the Italian peninsula were begun: naval maneuvers in the Mediterranean; a "simulated" land invasion of Sardinia (May 4); and "Operation Dashing Impact" to begin May 10 in the Trieste-Trento region of the northeast encompassing Friuli and the entire earthquake disaster area.

Italian military sources, however, reported a fourth set of "maneuvers" to begin in Italy May 4, whose nature, location and code-name were to remain secret.

During that week, a spate of fire-bombings and related terrorism ordered by Gianni Agnelli also began to sweep the nation, including factory bombings in Turin, Milan and the destruction of a Carabinieri barracks in Venice. "Special chemical substances," were used in the preparation of the bombs by men who were clearly militarily trained "experts."

On May 4, former Texas Governor John Connally, a member of the Rockefeller-dominated Federal Intelligence Advisory Board, joined with Clare Booth-Luce and CIA-operative of 1967 Greek coup experience, Henry Tasca, in the formation of a "Citizens Alliance for Mediterranean Freedom." CAMF's explicit purpose was "to prevent entry into the government by the Italian Communists" — whose inability to control their working class base was the publicly identified reason for Henry Kissinger's preference for the military coup option.

On May 6 at 9:00 AM, earthquake struck Friuli and the surrounding areas; by the morning of May 7, 5,000 NATO troops were already on the scene and the Ministry of the Interior's Cossiga's under-secretary, Zamberletti, had created a special commission to oversee "disaster relief" in coordination with the Roman Military General Staff and

NATO troops under the command of Rockefeller protegee, General Alexander Haig.

On May 8, 9 and 10, after-shocks ravaged the Friuli region. By this time, the region was under full military control. Over 15,000 military and paramilitary personnel in the area were dominated by U.S. and West German NATO forces but included British SAS forces of Northern Ireland "civil population control" experience. A mere few hundreds of fire-fighters have been conducting actual rescue operations, while the military has taken over food, water and medicine distribution, civilian control, population transfer and all means of transportation. Italian newspapers continuously have been reporting the "relief and rescue operations" to be so chaotic that a precise plan of chaos is strongly implied.

On May 11, new and "unexpected" earthquakes struck the south of Italy, including the cities of Naples, Taranta and Catania. Like the Friuli quakes whose epicenter was located in the Adriatic Sea, the quakes in the south spread from beneath the Jonian Sea southeast of Sicily.

On May 12-13, Nelson Rockefeller and Gianni Agnelli, personally visited the Friuli disaster area; they later held secret and unreported meetings with operations commission head Zamberletti. On the same day, a new contingent of West German NATO troops arrived in the country; with them came West German Defense Minister Leber.

On May 14, NATO agent Enrico Berlinguer of the Italian Communist Party withdrew his party's longstanding "historic compromise" policy of Communist participation in a Christian Democratic government. In its stead, Berlinguer proposed an "Emergency National Government" for crisis-management fitting all the austerity and working class "sacrifice"-related specifications laid down by Wall Street for an "autocratic fascist regime" to collect the nation's debt.

On May 15, a spokesman for Vice President Rockefeller announced that the \$25 million in U.S. earthquake relief would be administered by U.S. personnel under the direction of the CIA-controlled Agency for International Development, with AID representative Daniel Parker in charge. Parker, who had been involved in orchestrating military coups in Latin America for the CIA and who had accompanied Rockefeller on his tour of the earthquake site would be given use of U.S. military personnel to help him "disburse the aid." The government spokesman indicated that "not one penny of the aid would be touched by the corrupt Italian government." Arrangements for carrying out this operation were reportedly concluded during Rockefeller's meeting with NATO operative Zamberletti.

NATO's Earthquake-Causing Capability

The evidence that NATO in fact possesses the capability to not only capitalize upon but cause or at least focus earthquakes and other "natural" disasters (e.g., weather modification), is unannounced but well-documented in the public domain.

A leading Italian expert on earthquakes who was widely quoted as having predicted the Friuli tremors, Dr. Bendandi of the Seismology Observatory of Faenza in northern Italy,

refused comment on the possibility that NATO exercised "geothermal warfare" capabilities to cause the current Italian calamities. Mr. Bendandi was willing, however, to state his "personal conviction" that "the Guatemala earthquake last year was caused artificially by an underground atomic explosion."

That is only one of the methods under intensive study by NATO and the U.S. Defense Department for the last 20 years,