
ITALY

Socialists urge talks with Red Brigades

by Mary Sonnenblick

To Italians, recent headlines must provoke a flash of "dèjà vu": a highly placed official is kidnapped; his photo appears on front pages flanked by Red Brigades insignia; an anguished wife pleads publicly that the government not sacrifice the life of her husband; and the leader of the Socialist Party, Bettino Craxi, favors official negotiations with terrorists, "to save human lives."

The victim is Giovanni D'Urso, a magistrate working in a special antiterrorist unit of the Justice Ministry; he was kidnapped by the Red Brigades Dec. 12, 1980. But the kidnapping and its aftermath inevitably recall the kidnapping and later murder in 1978 of Aldo Moro, then president of the dominant Christian Democratic Party.

That was the most wrenching political event in Italy in recent memory. The political chaos opened by the national debate over whether the government should capitulate to the demands of the terrorists, was precisely calculated to prevent the very national unity that Moro had been in the process of building.

Now that debate, and the wounds it made in national political life, have been reopened. Just as in 1978, the battle is really over the future of Italy: whether terrorism will be allowed to usher in an era of austerity.

Former Bank of Italy governor, Guido Carli, Dec. 11, the day before the kidnapping took place, presented his predictions for Italy and the world to a select group of representatives of economic power in Italy. World trade is destined to collapse in 1981, said Carli; interest rates will shoot up "unforeseeably" in the next six months; growth rates will be reduced to zero or near it.

Based on this picture, Carli made the following prescriptions for Italy: strict control of inflation, and sacrifice, "on the Argentine model." Carli is recommending a military government to enforce an otherwise totally unworkable austerity policy for his country.

That is the policy of the European aristocracy, and it can only be implemented by destroying the possibility for cooperation between the healthy sectors of the two major political institutions in the country: the mass Catholic party, the Christian Democrats, and the second largest party in the country, the Communists.

That is where Bettino Craxi comes in.

Craxi has leveraged his Socialist Party (third largest with 12 percent of the vote) into a pivotal position as the

Christian Democrats' major government ally, both on a local and national level, and aims at the prime minister-ship himself. His party's ideology is made-to-order for implementing the oligarchist plan: the Socialists are in favor of drug and pornography legalization, are vehemently against nuclear energy, and are very soft, officially, on terrorism. Such prominent Socialist leaders as leftist Giacomo Mancini have publicly defended known terrorists.

Fight among Christian Democrats

Just before the D'Urso kidnapping, Craxi's Socialists and their allies in the right wing of the Christian Democratic Party came under heavy attack from the Communists and *their* friends in the DC. At this point, right-wing Christian Industry Minister Toni Bisaglia has been forced to submit his resignation, and two Socialist undersecretaries are facing the same fate.

This offensive occurred at the same time as the Christian Democrats' National Council gave its qualified approval to cooperation with the Communists on a local level, for the first time in over a year. Toni Bisaglia bitterly opposes such cooperation and promotes alliances with the Socialists instead.

But Craxi's most influential friend in the Christian Democracy is Amintore Fanfani, the distinguished president of the Italian Senate. Fanfani actually campaigned to make Craxi prime minister during a 1979 government crisis. Amidst this fight came the Dec. 11 assassination of the mayor of the southern Italian village of Pagani.

Mayor Marcello Torre was a Christian Democrat who made his career in the party faction headed by Bernardo D'Arezzo, the regional boss of the party machine run from the top by Fanfani. The southern section of the party works through patronage and is rotten with corruption, interlocking on many levels with the Neopolitan mafia, the Camorra.

According to press accounts, Marcello Torre had made deals with the Camorra. After the Dec. 4 earthquake, Torre realized that if the underworld were allowed to pollute the earthquake reconstruction effort, not only would the reconstruction never take place, but the Camorra would use the huge influx of national treasury relief funds to make itself all-powerful.

Rome's *La Repubblica* says that just before he was murdered, Torre had quarreled with Fanfanian boss D'Arezzo. In an interview in the Communist Party daily *L'Unita*, he denounced the Camorra.

A spokesman for the Communist Party-dominated trade union federation, the CGIL, is quoted in *Repubblica* as saying: "We were counting on him. He was fighting a battle against the Camorra. . . ." Other press stories indicate that Torre had planned to take advantage of the National Council's green light and construct a regional government alliance with the Communists.