

## Report from Rome by Antonio Gaspari

### Drug mafia organizes for 1992

*Two companies that should come under scrutiny are Philip Morris and the new Jardine Insurance S.p.A. in Italy.*

The publicity barrage depicting 1992 as the threshold of a new, politically and economically integrated Europe is providing a smokescreen for a host of unsavory schemes. Not only will the projected abolition of customs controls clear the way for multinational firms to gobble up independent small and medium businesses, but the free traffic in capital will bring easy immunity to "Dope, Inc."

The mafia we are talking about is not the kind stereotyped in films like *The Godfather*, nor even the bloodier and truer version of the clashes between crime kingpins Luciano Liggio and Tommaso Buscetta. Atop the pyramid controlling narcotics smuggling are the world's biggest financial institutions.

The ex-chief of the Italian domestic secret services (SISDE) Vincenzo Parisi, now head of the Prefect Police, during a conference last May 18 at the Tax Police training school, called organized crime an actual "anti-state." It is a "seedbed of the universe of crime, an amalgam of all the criminal pathologies emerging in post-industrial society, a peril which presents alarming symptoms above all regarding economic criminality, which corrupts persons above suspicion and penetrates the legal economic system and the public apparatus, polluting them. The complexity of the system offers countless instruments to economic criminality: creation of fictitious companies; fraud against creditors; computer data manipulation; stock market, banking, and currency infractions; food swindles. . . . Drug

traffic, which is in constant expansion, confers today an unprecedented power to mafia-style organized crime."

Referring to the Unified European Market of 1992, Parisi said that it "will see the progressive dissolution of the present national frontiers with events that outstrip . . . every possible forecast."

The commander of the Tax Police, Gen. Gaetano Pellegrino, showed his concern about the 1992 liberalization of the markets in an interview of Aug. 20 which was printed in all the press. General Pellegrino said: "The mafia is already capable of moving billions from one country to another. We favor liberalizing currency, but we demand that there remain traces of the operations so that the dynamic of flows can be reconstructed. For this, cooperation with the Bank of Italy and the Italian Exchange Union is indispensable . . . to be able to carry out a broad-based investigation on the international scale."

Two companies worth looking at more closely in the context of the pre-1992 reorganization of major firms suspected of ties to the dope traffic, would be Jardine and Philip Morris. The English group Jardine Insurance Brokers, ninth in the world ranking of insurance brokers, has launched itself in Italy by sewing up a joint-venture deal with the brokerage firm Area.

Jardine for more than half a century ran the opium trade from India, then a British colony, into China. Jardine, Matheson was so influential that it convinced Lord Palmerston, the British prime minister, to start the First

Opium War against China and dictated the conditions of peace, including legalized opium trafficking. According to Beeching's book *The Opium Wars*, Jardine, Matheson has kept active participation down to the present in heroin trafficking with the Far East.

Jardine Insurance S.p.A. will be the Italian correspondent firm of Lloyds of London. The president of the new company, Jardine Insurance S.p.A., is Alberto Cordero di Montezemolo, whose brother Luca chairs the organizing committee for the world soccer championships to be held in Italy in 1990.

The Philip Morris story is a bit more complicated. The well-known leader in production and sales of tobacco products (Muratti and Marlboro) has been tempted for some time by profits from marketing drugs.

According to a Tax Police report published on June 24, 1983 by the Rome news agency OP, collusion has emerged between Philip Morris, the Italian Radical Party, and the businessman of the outlawed P-2 Freemasonic lodge, Roberto Memmo, with the aim of liberalizing the laws on marijuana and hashish consumption in Italy: "a target," the report says, "which, if achieved, would allow them to make huge earnings from the manufacture of cigarettes containing such substances."

The Tax Police probe began in 1980, when they were informed that Philip Morris was stockpiling marijuana and hashish to get ready for a rise in market prices, in a long-term expectation of liberalized drug laws. On June 16, 1988, the left-wing daily *Il Manifesto*, always well informed on drug matters, published an article stating that Philip Morris and its sister tobacco companies met secretly in Lausanne, Switzerland to "support all the way the campaign for legalization of drugs."