

High stakes in killing of Sicily's Falcone

by Mark Burdman and Umberto Pascali

The May 23 murder of Sicilian Judge Giovanni Falcone involves far more than a "mafia revenge hit," as implied by some. The massacre that killed Falcone, his wife and four others, and critically wounded 12, was set off by a ton of dynamite placed under the highway, at a point that the magistrate's car had to pass on the way from the airport of Punta Raisi to nearby Palermo.

In a May 26 article, the Rome daily *L'Unità* compared the sophisticated military methods used to kill Falcone to the killing of Deutsche Bank chief Alfred Herrhausen in November 1989. Both were killed by a laser-guided device, capable of operating with the precision of a few hundredths of a second to detonate a bomb against a car moving at 100 miles an hour. These are classic terrorist, irregular warfare methods.

Falcone's assassination eliminates one of the world's top experts on that nexus of activities and individuals which brings together the organized crime families, shady political dealings, international intelligence service operations, money laundering, drug trafficking, terrorism, and obscure political-masonic arrangements.

There are numerous European media reports that Falcone was on the trail of big Swiss banking connections to Italy's "Milanogate" scandal, which implicated political figures of all parties, as well as top businessmen in illicit financial activities. The day after the atrocity, Judge Carlo Palermo, Italy's best-known investigator into money laundering, drugs, and arms dealing, stated: "To discover what is going on in the Swiss banks would bring down the whole system. It is not by chance that Falcone was killed at the moment the Milan inquiry moved to Switzerland, just as it was no coincidence that [Falcone's] failed assassination in 1989 came just as he was collaborating closely with his Swiss colleagues. The dynamite was found after two Swiss magistrates had left Falcone after asking about the role of Swiss bank accounts. I myself felt under close surveillance when following leads into the sanctuaries of high finance." (Palermo had escaped a car-bomb attempt a few miles from where Falcone was killed.)

Falcone himself said, in a last interview published posthumously on May 26 in Germany's *Die Welt*: "It is my personal view that the most important step would be to cut down the economic power of the criminals. One should have

the capability to center investigations much more on the monetary background. . . . The laundering of the dirty money should be fought much harder."

On May 26, the Russian government paper *Izvestia* revealed that Falcone had been pivotal in a joint probe into the tracks of Soviet Communist Party capital flight into Italy and other parts of Europe, working with a special squad set up by the Russian government. Falcone planned to travel to Russia either in late May or early June to work on this. *Izvestia* reported the suspicion in Moscow, that "mafia channels" in Italy had been being used as conduits. As the Milan daily *Corriere della Sera* paraphrased *Izvestia*, "It is not to be excluded that the channel of this money is into the hidden structures of Italy, and that part of it has been in the form of bribes, as well as from illegal trafficking in gold and precious stones." (In Italy, "hidden structures" often refers to secretive masonic networks.)

Moro parallel, 'strategy of tension'

Many in Italy are drawing the parallel between the killing of Falcone and the 1978 kidnap-murder of ex-Prime Minister Aldo Moro, much on the public mind since the March 11 killing of Sicilian politician Salvo Lima. Antonio Cipriani, writing in *L'Unità* last March 19, likened current events to the "strategy of tension" that afflicted the country in the 1970s. Other sources recalled the charge of Moro's widow and others, that Henry Kissinger had help finger Moro for elimination.

Germany's *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* wrote May 25: "The importance of the terrorist hit [against Falcone] is coming close to that of the abduction and assassination of Aldo Moro, which was never sufficiently clarified," and added: "A crucial moment was chosen in which the state is paralyzed in a double sense. There is no acting President—[Francesco] Cossiga has resigned—and neither is there a designated prime minister."

The comparison with the Moro crime is key, not just because Moro was abducted during a political "power vacuum," but also because *after* Moro's capture, U.S. and British anti-terror specialists hustled to Italy as part of an offer of "help" from Washington and London, took over the investigations, and are considered today responsible for the "incompetence" in the investigations that led to missing or misinterpreting any clue until it was too late, and Moro was a corpse.

Over the Memorial Day weekend, U.S. Ambassador Peter Secchia contacted FBI Director William Sessions, the head of the Drug Enforcement Administration, Robert Bonner, and Attorney General William Barr, who offered immediate "help," according to a Roman newspaper: "to send teams of specialists like those that, through the financial intervention of presidential candidate Ross Perot, were sent to Italy during the kidnaping of NATO General Dozier" in 1981. On May 26, the three anti-crime leaders held a summit in Washington to discuss the Palermo massacre.

Rudolph Giuliani, the former New York U.S. Attorney and Bush-backed candidate for mayor in New York, gave an unofficial account of what these "Greeks bearing gifts" may offer Italy: "What is needed is the army, the death penalty. We would need a series of exemplary executions, special laws, confiscation of mafia assets, mass arrests, a superpolice like our FBI." Giuliani also outlined a plan for the military occupation of Sicily.

As in March 1978, the issue is whether Italy will pursue a policy of real independence and European integration, or will remain a pawn in the Yalta system, updated as Bush's new world order. Various senior Anglo-American operatives have said recently that the focus of NATO is shifting southward, with Rome emerging as the critical center of NATO operations. Italy was recently being pushed to take the lead in an Anglo-American war against Libya, abandoning its natural role of bridge between Europe and Middle East and Africa to act as a gendarme against these economic partners.

A return to the 'commissars'

The murder is also intended to further a process of destruction of Italy's state institutions, to pave the way for a new corporatist structure mimicking the Fascist state of the 1920s. Outgoing Christian Democratic Party head Arnaldo Forlani reacted: "What is the aim? To prove that the country is ungovernable? So that people start saying that it would be better to have another Mussolini?" Since the April 5 national elections, in which the traditional parties hemorrhaged votes to regionalist parties like the Lombard League, Italy has been under pressure to set up a "government of experts," or "technicians," a regime of International Monetary Fund debt collectors. The Swiss financial gnomes are banking on the clout of European Community's Maastricht Treaty, once it is ratified by the participating European nations, to force this change on Italy.

The choice of Oscar Luigi Scalfaro as new President could set this scheme back. On May 24 Chamber of Deputies chairman Scalfaro rejected the "mafia theory" for Falcone's murder, saying: "Would the Mafia alone have done that? Or would this not be, rather, the mark of terrorism, this act of war?" He mooted that certain people were trying to "condition" political life in Italy, or even to revive a "strategy of tension." The next day he was elected President, ending two weeks of political stalemate, as the PDS (the non-Stalinist wing of the former communist party) banded with other forces to give him a two-thirds majority. The French daily *Le Monde* May 26 said that Scalfaro had spoken out loud, what many leading Italian figures were saying in private.

Scalfaro represents Rome's "governissimo" group, which seeks to forge a strong cross-party and legislative-executive arrangement, to avoid a regime of fascist-like "commissars." He is a strong Catholic, with close ties to the Vatican, and, at the same time, has a Moro-like policy of opening to the communists.

OAS is an enforcer for one-world order

by Valerie Rush

Under Bush administration pressures, the Organization of American States is being recast as an enforcement agency for the Anglo-American one-world order. No longer merely a rubber stamp for Washington's neo-colonial interventions into Ibero-America, the OAS is now slated to become a regional adjunct of the United Nations' "collective security" doctrine, tested to such great effect in "Desert Storm." As the fires of popular resistance to International Monetary Fund austerity and Bush "democracy" spread across the continent, the OAS will now be the instrument wielded by the Anglo-American establishment to stamp those fires out.

Argentine foreign minister and Bush stooge Guido di Tella was explicit at the May 18-21 assembly of OAS foreign ministers in Nassau, Bahamas, when he insisted that endowment of the OAS with "intrusive powers" would enable that organization to achieve collectively what the United States could only do unilaterally in, say, Panama in December 1989—i.e., invade. Di Tella argued that the theory that the OAS has served as "an agent of penetration by the United States into Latin America is mistaken and surpassed by the times. . . . If the OAS had had powers it did not have at the time but could have now, the U.S. invasion of Panama would not have happened."

OAS 'reform'

With the explicit backing of the Argentine and other governments, U.S. Ambassador to the OAS Luigi Einaudi orchestrated the drive to "reform" the OAS charter, to redefine the concept of "hemispheric security" as collective defense of democracy, free trade, and the environment—as defined by the overlords in Washington. Einaudi argued that such a concept "would set an exemplary precedent" and was "an impressive proposal for the post-Cold War era that, doubtless, represents a significant contribution not only to the security of the Americas, but to the entire world."

Should there be any doubt as to whence comes the inspiration for this "exemplary precedent," one needn't look further than the April 25, 1991 address by former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Strange McNamara, on his "vision of the post-Cold War world." Said McNamara, author of the "McNamara Doctrine," which urges the elimination of na-