

## Former CIA chief hails Russian black market

Former CIA director William Colby wrote in a syndicated column last month that Italy's experience with the black market after World War II provides the best model for Russia to follow in getting out of its economic crisis. The column was published in *Die Presse* newspaper of Vienna on April 15, and the quotes given here are translated from that source.

"In 1945," Colby wrote, "Italy found itself in a situation as catastrophic as that facing Russia today. The economy was ruined, the currency was worthless, the chief means of exchange was a pack of 'Lucky Strike' cigarettes. But as the years went by, the black market was recognized; in the footsteps of the retailers came the wholesalers, following the wholesalers came the producers. . . ."

"Russia now finds itself at Italy's first stage," Colby continues, "with the pack of Marlboros replacing Lucky Strike. The black market is expanding, but it is a market which will call forth 50,000 new small retailers. These, in turn, will call forth the wholesalers and then the producers who can supply their needs."

Colby claims that this black market created Italy's postwar prosperity, not the "corrupt" state industries. Col-



William Colby: *Let them eat Marlboros.*

by, who was stationed with the CIA in Italy in the 1950s, neglects to mention that the cigarette black market was administered by the Mafia and the Camorra, crime organizations reestablished by the American occupation forces, through such intermediaries as Meyer Lansky's partner Charles "Lucky" Luciano.

75% of all invoices related to this import were falsified. Most of the imports came from West Germany. As Professor Plachta stated, "The present [1992] flood of commodities, mostly imported and distributed by an army of street dealers throughout Poland, has more in common with a black, rather than free market economy."

Cigarettes and gas were also brought in. Did Edgar Bronfman's presence in East Germany in 1988 have anything to do with the flood of alcohol out of West Germany, through East Germany, into Poland? Schalck-Golodkowski's "KoKo," under East German intelligence (Stasi) supervision, had often smuggled western-produced alcohol back into the West reaping significant hard-currency commissions.

### Cigarettes and heroin: the Balkan route

Philip Morris has a long and ominous history of involvement in the East bloc that centers on the interrelationship of cigarette smuggling and heroin trafficking, East bloc intelligence services, and the U.S. control of the Sicilian mafia and Camorra apparatus reestablished in Italy after World War II. Contacts from this period are the basis for the current expansion of commercial sales and related development of smuggling syndicates in the East. Italy has had for decades

a large black market for cigarettes dominated by Philip Morris and Reynolds brands. There are two prime routes for physically smuggling American-produced cigarettes into Italy. One involves falsification of trucking TIR documents in order to permit trucking delivery without paying customs and excise taxes on cigarettes. Another was to ship them into the East bloc, and then down to the Yugoslavian and Albanian Adriatic coast, where primarily Naples-based Camorra crime families would arrange for high-speed boats to smuggle the cigarettes into Italy.

During 1974-75, a dramatic development occurred leading to an unbroken trend of annual increases in heroin addiction in the United States and western Europe. According to numerous sources, the Sicilian mafia and Naples Camorra concluded an alliance which then drew in Turkish mafia families for a dramatic expansion of trafficking of opium products out of the Middle East Golden Crescent into the West. The start-up capital for this venture came out of an expansion of cigarette smuggling. One useful description of this is contained in the book *The Mafia* by Claire Sterling. Unfortunately, this book purports to document that the Sicilian mafia itself is the global mastermind of organized crime. The role of the United States government in releasing Meyer Lansky