
IPS Exclusive Interviews At Secret Siena Bankers Conference

An official of the Monte dei Paschi Bank of Siena: *It is too dangerous to go against America directly.*

Vice-Director of the Bank of Italy: *I don't know David Rockefeller; I don't know the politics of Chase Manhattan; I am only concerned with central banks...I haven't talked to you — don't use my name.* [Taking Labor Committee publications and fleeing.]

In the wake of the Vice-Director's flight, Kindleberger, professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who had just explained to the hapless Vice-Director Rockefeller's strategy, turned to IPS: *What you are saying is a conspiratorial theory, and I don't believe it. You are completely infantile and anyway...I am an academic and these things don't interest me.*

IPS: *You have a responsibility to take.*

Kindleberger: *No, I am a theoretician.*

IPS: *But you know that what you are deciding will have consequences for all humanity and therefore you have a responsibility to shoulder.*

Kindleberger [pensively]: *Okay, Okay, I'm an irresponsible —.*

IPS: *You are not responsible for what you discuss and its consequences for humanity?*

Kindleberger: *I am irresponsible and happy to be so! Talk to him [indicating Eugene Birnbaum, a Vice-President of Chase Manhattan Bank] — he's responsible.*

IPS: *What is your name?*

Answer: *I am Birnbaum.*

IPS: *Do you know what you are doing for David Rockefeller?*

Birnbaum: *What do you mean?*

IPS: *Are you conscious of the work you are doing for your chairman?*

Birnbaum: *Me, I work for many things — for my self, for my family, for my children, my president pays me*

IPS: *All the things you have listed are part of humanity — that humanity which David Rockefeller is destroying.*

Birnbaum: *David Rockefeller is the greatest benefactor I have ever known, and he has done a very great deal for humanity.*

IPS: *For example, Zero Growth?*

Birnbaum: *What's that?*

IPS: *Zero Population Growth.*

Birnbaum: *Ah, that John D. III!*

IPS: *Yes, but you are a trust.*

Birnbaum: *Who are you? Who do you work for?*

IPS: *New Solidarity International Press Service, the press service of the International Caucus of Labor Committees.*

Birnbaum: *Do you know what you are doing?*

IPS: *Certainly.*

Birnbaum: *I could say the same things to you that you say to me, that you are destroying humanity!*

A short conversation with Robert Mundell, a Professor of Economics at New York City's Columbia University, one of the organizers of the Siena meeting who claims close personal friendship with Mr. Birnbaum, occurred at this point. Mr. Mundell explained that the document to be issued out of the conference was not yet prepared [no official statement had been issued from the conference as of this writing — Ed], and that he would grant IPS an interview.

IPS: *What resolutions did you arrive at?*

Mundell: *We have no definite resolution, but we discussed the importance of giving stability guarantees to the Eurodollar market.*

IPS: *Which measures?*

Mundell: *What do you mean?*

IPS: *Which measures were discussed?*

[Abrupt end to interview at this embarrassing point.]

Mr. Birnbaum then interceded, remarking that since the official report had not yet been printed, it was not possible to give official statements to the press. However, he granted a brief "discussion" — not, he said, as an interview, but rather as an "attempt to understand each other."

IPS: *We know that Rockefeller favored, via Mills, the accord for the loan that Italy received from Schmidt [Chancellor of West Germany — Ed]. That is because Italy is bankrupt and if it falls it endangers Rockefeller's paper empire. But some conditions will have to be imposed.*

Birnbaum: *Excuse me for interrupting you, but Rockefeller loves Italy; he works 18 hours a day He had done everything because of [his] love for humanity I have seen his most sincere reactions and I can bear witness to that Rockefeller is a very rich man and he does not need other money.*

IPS: *What you have said — that he has a lot of money — is an error. His money is all paper that must be paid back.*

Birnbaum: *You see, you do not understand what you are saying. 1971 was a very hard blow for him He only owns 10 per cent of Chase, the remainder is small stockholders and savers... There is a distinction between property titles and money.*

IPS: *It was Nixon in 1971, but the present situation would have come about just the same — as we said in*

1971 — the Second World Depression.

Birnbaum: *There are people who said that the depression would have come 40, 30, 10 years ago.*

IPS: *What is happening is that the interest on the debts to Rockefeller must be paid back.*

Birnbaum: *Which debts?*

IPS: *Debts and credits of the international credit system.*

Birnbaum: *And what do you propose?*

IPS: *A debt moratorium against Rockefeller.*

Birnbaum [laughing scornfully as he launched into an apologia for Rockefeller and "free enterprise"]: ... *Chase is the bank of detente Rockefeller has financed institutes for social development*

IPS: *The institutes for brainwashing?*

Birnbaum: *No one has been brainwashed in these institutions.*

IPS: *Some of our members have been brainwashed there [referring to the January 1974 discovery of the brainwashing of Labor Committee member Christopher White].*

Birnbaum: *You who say these things have been brainwashed! I think that Communism is a beautiful idea, but it is not realizable...Allende in Chile was a man impelled by good intentions, like Rockefeller, but he provoked inflation, chaos, even if he nationalized the multinationals...I think that the same will happen in England and Italy...I like freedom...The problem is that today*

freedom is denied, today everywhere there is control through the microphone...There is one in every toilet...

IPS: *You cited England, saying that it is traveling the same road as Chile. What do you mean?*

Birnbaum: *In England there is a tendency towards socialism. They go ahead with the the distribution of taxes and wages. This means that they take away from the enterprises the possibility of making any profit. What is more, now Wedgewood Benn [see IPS No. 17 — Ed] has threatened to nationalize the enterprises if they do not make investments. But how are the enterprises going to make investments if there isn't a minimum of profit? This is contradiction that will bring chaos to England.*

IPS: *What about Italy?*

Birnbaum: *Italy can take loans any time if it uses them in a productive way. Now it distributes them to workers in the public employment sector, not productive. This must be eliminated if any economic development is to take place.*

IPS: *But there are political and economic forces that represent these social strata [public-sector workers], which must be politically and economically destroyed [if the public sector is to be eliminated].*

Birnbaum: *The time allowed is ended; it has been nice talking with you.*

PCI Laments Agnelli Switch on "Historical Compromise"

Sept. 5 (IPS) — The Italian Communist Party (PCI) paper *L'Unita* covered an interview today with FIAT magnate Gianni Agnelli in the Italian financial daily *Il Sole-24 Ore* merely to say that he backed down from his previous support of the "historical compromise," the PCI plan for collaborating in a bourgeois government. Said Rockefeller's playboy crony: "I am certain that I speak for private industry as represented by Confindustria [the industrialists' Confederation of which he is President] when I say that the new compromises of which there has been so much....[would] distance our country from the Western world."

To reassure Agnelli of the Communist Party's willingness to prostitute herself to the so-called Western world, party hack Galluzzi is quoted by *l'Unita* in the same article: "While we have some criticisms to make and we are not favorable to the Atlantic Pact, we do recognize that Italy has a geographical situation...and international relations and alliances which the PCI cannot disregard.... There are two military blocs that ... cannot be overcome unilaterally in a way to put one at the disadvantage relative to the other."

What *l'Unita* ignored is the major portion of the

Agnelli interview reported in the FIAT-controlled Italian daily *La Stampa*. First of all, Agnelli claimed that the economic situation is not so bad (echoing *l'Unita's* insistence that talk of general collapse is mere "alarmism"). All private industry needs, Agnelli offered, is a free hand in "restructuring" — in other words, recycling the labor force in exactly the way the Agnellis have planned for FIAT. (FIAT's offer to trade off job security for the destruction of all union protection already has been rejected flatly by FIAT workers.)

Agnelli then touted the "dump the parasites" line, lamenting that the "bottomless pit" of the unproductive State sector still soaks up most tax money. Finally, on the universal cost-of-living escalator demand now being raised by some trade unionists, Agnelli warned that such measures would bring down the whole Italian economy.

Agnelli's proposals to lay off the parasites in Italy's state bureaucracy have been espoused editorially by *l'Unita*; but reportedly the proposals are not getting very far with Italian industrial workers. Clearly, if Mr. Agnelli wanted to rid Italy of parasites (and the PCI must know this), he would aim at lopping off the largest in his own class.