

Radical professors jailed in Italy

On April 8, Italian political, journalist and professional circles were stunned by the surprise arrests of almost 22 persons who had previously been thought of as respectable citizens, for complicity in terrorist acts. For the most part those arrested were well-known professors and journalists connected with the Paduan "autonomous" left. Among them were Antonio Negri, a teacher of "State Theory" in the Political Science Department of Padua University, and, according to Italian press descriptions, the "theoretician of the most violent of the extremist fringe"; Emilio Vesce, a highschool teacher, widely known as Negri's "right hand" and the editor of the Autonomist *Radio Sherwood* and the daily *Autonomia*; Oreste Scalzone, a founder of the Autonomists and director of the aborted magazine *Metropolis*, whose first issue was scheduled for release the day following his arrest; and Giuseppe Nicotri, formerly of the editorial staff of *L'Espresso* magazine and the daily *La Repubblica*. So many professors from the Padua University Political Science faculty have been arrested, in fact, that the entire department has been shut down!

The arrests mark a radical departure from previous European counterterror operations in three respects: first, the "clandestine armed party"—the murderous Red Brigades—are now assumed to be in effect the same entity as the above-ground, "mass-oriented," "autonomous" left, the Autonomi. Second, the operative direction of the Red Brigades assassinations and other attacks is being imputed to professors, who heretofore hid under the cover of being "mere theorists." Finally, the scope of the investigations that prepared the present crackdown has broken through national boundaries and appears to involve close cooperation between major European governments. That factor could presage the end of the international terrorist command and control centers themselves.

Each of these points was presented as necessary to the absolute victory over international terror, in the dossier published in late 1978 by the European Labor Party, *Who Killed Aldo Moro*.

Twelve of the arrested ideologues, in fact, have now been accused as accomplices in the kidnapping and assassination of former Prime Minister Moro and the bloody massacre of his five-man escort on March 16, 1978. Despite an attempted terrorist counterattack which took the lives of a Secret Service agent and a 23-year old member of the Communist Party (PCI), the April 8 arrests are being followed up in other cities.

In Florence, an arms-purchasing ring was broken

up, netting 3 arrests, on April 18. In Rome, 13 were arrested on April 20, including a journalist for the weekly *Panorama*, on charges of conspiracy against the state. Professor Negri himself has been placed in isolation in a high-security prison in Rome, where he has been under interrogation over the past four days.

International operation

Dr. Pietro Calogero, the public prosecutor in charge of the Padua arrests, said in a press conference on April 17, that "Autonomy is not a purely Italian phenomenon." According to the daily *L'Unita*, organ of the PCI, "Toni Negri is considered by the investigators to be a fundamental link between the centers of the Italian 'armed party' and the subversive formations—some already consolidated, some still embryonic—in other countries. There is a list of such countries: France, Germany, Belgium, Portugal, Canada."

On April 24, the Milan daily *Corriere della Sera* reported that special units of the Italian and French secret services had been collaborating for months before the Paduan professors' arrests, on an operation involving the infiltration and monitoring of terrorist groups. The break in the Negri case, according to *Corriere*, came when these units learned of Negri's presence in Paris for a period during the Moro kidnapping, at the invitation of his long-time friend and patron, the structuralist Louis Althusser. French radio is now reporting that the center of European terrorism is now being identified by several intelligence services as Paris.

The evidence

The initial reaction of the "liberal," terrorist-sympathizing, and radical press in Italy was that Judge Calogero had no proof and that the arrests represented a wave of repression and an attempt to prosecute "crimes of opinion." The response of the Paduan magistracy to this outcry of concern for the rights of terrorism to express itself, was given by Aldo Fais, the Paduan District Attorney. Fais asked: "For God's sake, do you think that after two years of work, Calogero would have arrested Negri just on the basis of reading his books? ... We have proof, and plenty of it."

The evidence against Negri has been leaked to the press more than in the other cases. It is of three types: first, a computer-generated grid which correlates ideas and actual marching orders found in Negri's writings with realized terrorist incidents: Second, documentary

evidence recovered from a "little tin box" that Negri consigned to safekeeping with a friend when he was notified that he was about to be arrested. The documents are reported to include case studies written by Negri of various Red Brigades cells, criticisms of various attacks carried out by the group, and recommendations for correcting strategic and tactical errors by the terrorists. Third, there is evidence gathered from the months of wiretaps and other surveillance of Negri and his friends, including rumors that computer-analyzed voice prints can identify him as the anonymous Red Brigades spokesman who telephoned the wife of Aldo Moro and announced that "the sentence would be executed" unless she managed to convince the government to grant the terrorists demands.

Theory and practice

The Italian Socialist Party (PSI) has led a chorus of defenders of the professors' right to preach assassination and destabilization. The Socialist daily, *Avanti*, has maintained that there is a difference between the Red Brigades terrorism and the supposedly legitimate Autonomist violence. And the Socialist-linked *La Repubblica* on April 11 published an interview with Franco Piperno, a fugitive wanted in the Padua case, in which Piperno threatened Calogero, the PCI and the government as well as informing its readers that "in 10 pages of documentation" there was "no proof."

The protest is international. The *New York Times* stressed on April 17 that "left-wing newspapers (were) raising questions about the legality of the terrorist inquiry" and devoted much of its article to the radical lawyers' countercharges against the Padua magistrates. In Paris, a "Collective for Information on the Italian Situation" has prepared an information packet in Negri's defense and Jean-Paul Sartre, a well-known crony of the Baader-Meinhof terrorists, has actually gone to Rome to defend his old friends and collaborators.

The most fervent argument, however, came from PSI member and long-time terrorist sympathizer Norberto Bobbio, who was reported by *Corriere della Sera* of April 11 to have said that "among the theoreticians of the new left, he (Negri) is one of the most culturally advanced. He is a serious and profound scholar. It is very difficult, if not absurd, to establish a connection between thought and praxis."

—Mary Sonnenblick

Who is Antonio Negri?

Antonio "Toni" Negri, professor of Comparative Science at the University of Padua, is one of the single most important controllers of terrorism in Italy. Facing charges for armed conspiracy to overthrow the state, Negri and his colleagues are only meeting their long-delayed day of reckoning.

Toni Negri began his political career as a member of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI). In the mid-1950s, he allegedly left the PSI and became the editor and founder of two left-wing magazines: *Quaderni Rossi* (Red Notebooks) and *Contropiano* (Counterplan). In a short time, both magazines became the theoretical spokesmen for a new wave of anarcho-syndicalism identified by the generic name of operaismo (workerism).

By the mid-1960s, the ideas generated in *Quaderni Rossi* were appropriated by each and every one of the Maoist and anarchist countergangs which sprang out of the student movement. The ideas promoted by Negri in his magazines and books were straightforward: the state must be destroyed. In order to achieve that aim, the "revolutionary movement" had to pass from words and theories to deeds and the formation of the armed infrastructure required to "achieve our task." Negri continued to elaborate these ideas from his professorial chair at the University of Padua, a post he obtained in 1966 under the protection of PSI Central Committee member and "political linguist" Norberto Bobbio.

From Potere Operaio

Having laid the groundwork for indoctrination and recruitment, Negri founded the countergang Potere Operaio (workers' power) in 1967. He was assisted by Paul Piccone, editor of the Frankfurt School-linked magazine *Telos*, and the terrorist publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli. For several years up to his arrest two weeks ago, Negri was one of the directors of the "Marxist collection" for the Feltrinelli publishing House.

With the founding of Potere Operaio, the notion was conceived and extensively discussed of launching two countergangs at the same time, according to the testimony of police infiltrators. While one of the gangs would provide a "legal," above-ground cover, the second would be an underground terrorist organization.

In 1969, a group "split" from Potere Operaio ostensibly over the question of supporting terrorism. The group constituted itself as the "respectable" extraparliamentary grouplet Lotta Continua.

By 1973, the nucleus that remained of Potere Operaio began to collaborate and engage in "theoretical