

## FACTS BEHIND TERRORISM

### Counterterrorist forces close in on Italy's PSI

For the past four months, investigators in Italy have come closer and closer to the ruling circles of the Italian Socialist Party in their search for the murderers of former Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro and the controllers of the Red Brigades terrorists. Beginning with the April 8 arrest of Padua University Professor Antonio Negri and his associates in the Autonomi organizations, more details have come each week to light implicating leading figures of the PSI in control and protection of terrorist operations.

During the week of July 22, law enforcement officials closed in on one of the most powerful factions of the PSI—the Calabrian section, led by PSI factional chieftain Giacomo Mancini—with the arrest of Mancini's former son-in-law Paolo Lapponi for involvement in Red Brigades kidnappings and other planned terrorist operations. Since the time of the Negri arrest, PSI leaders, including Bettino Craxi, head of the PSI who had been proposed as the Prime Minister for Italy, Mancini, and other important PSI leaders had been under investigations by magistrates investigating Red Brigades controllers. In early June, the University of Cosenza in Calabria—a major base of the Mancini faction—was exposed as a center for logistics and safehousing of Red Brigades terrorists. Craxi himself was questioned by magistrates investigating the killings due to the PSI's direct con-

nection to known Red Brigades controllers such as Piperno, the still at large Autonomi leader who ran the *Metropoli* magazine.

The arrest of Lapponi evolved following a raid on an isolated farmhouse located in Rieti, Calabria, where police arrested three individuals: Ina Maria Pecchia, and two cousins, Gianpietro and Piero Bonano. In the farmhouse, police found a terrorist arsenal, including an arms cache and ammunition, documents belonging to the Red Brigades, manuals for the home production of bombs and tear gas, and a sound-proofed prison, complete with chloroform, which had been prepared to house a kidnap victim. Further evidence found at the farmhouse indicates that the group using this location was directly involved in the Moro murder, as well as the assassination last month of a colonel of the military police, Antonio Varisco. It was questioning of Rieti suspects that produced Lapponi's name and led to his arrest several days later while in the company of his supposedly estranged wife, Giuseppina Mancini, daughter of the powerful PSI leader.

The most critical information to emerge following the Rieti arrests however, is the fact that the Red Brigades operations are thoroughly interfaced with the Calabrian mafia networks. The interrogations of Pecchia and the Bonano cousins have established the following crucial points of further investigation:

- The Red Brigades and the Unita Combattenti Comunisti (UCC), the group which carried out the kidnapping and murder of Giuseppe Ambrosio, held joint meetings and shared their weapons supply. The UCC is known to have links to the Calabria mafia through the investigation of the murder of Giuseppe Andre, a serviceman who was killed in July, 1978.

- *Metropoli* magazine, the Autonomi publication which was closed down last June after the arrest of several of its editors for involvement in the Red Brigades, was financed by a 20 million lire payment that came from a kidnapping operation. Pecchia has stated Negri, Piperno, and Oreste Scalzone, another Autonomi leader arrested with Negri in April were involved in this transaction.

- Paolo Lapponi was an active member of the Rieti operation, along with Febrizio Panzieri, who is presently in prison awaiting trial for the unsuccessful attempt to kidnap industrialist Roberto Campilli on July 12. False identification cards bearing photos of both Lapponi and Panzieri were found in the farmhouse.

The fruits of the Rieti arrests are still not fully known. However, exposing Mancini's links to the organized "kidnapping industry" and to drug running, both common means of financing terrorist groups, is vital to stopping the terrorist menace in Italy.

—Michele Steinberg