

Billy's contact: Michele Papa

by Vivian Zoakos

The Senate Select Committee charged with the investigation of Billy Carter should pay close attention to the identity of the man who organized Carter into becoming a Libyan agent. That man is Michele Papa, one of the most notorious drug dealers and terrorist controllers throughout the Mediterranean.

Billy Carter became the paid agent of Libya in the following way:

Early in 1978 Papa received instructions from the Qaddafi government to recruit Billy Carter for Libya at whatever cost. Papa then summoned to Sicily his associate Mario Lianza, a real estate broker operating out of Atlanta, Georgia, and told him that if he could deliver the brother of the President, "all the wealth of Libya will be at your feet."

Lianza returned to Atlanta, and through a number of intermediaries contacted Billy Carter. Carter agreed, and in September 1979 Papa was able to organize the Libyan visit, including a stopover in Rome.

By April of 1980 Lianza admitted in an interview that he had acted in Papa's behalf in contacting Carter. The facts of his interview were published in the April 8, 1980 issue of the *New York Times*. A year earlier an identical account had been issued by the Italian press agency ANIPE.

Who is Michele Papa?

The Sicilian Michele Papa is a Mediterranean drug runner and a prominent member of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI). As *EIR* has repeatedly documented, the PSI is the Italian party of terrorism. It was the PSI which created the notorious Red Brigades gang that in 1978 assassinated ex-Premier Aldo Moro, and in the process almost brought down the postwar Italian republic's form of government.

As the leading Sicilian PSI boss, and the personal agent of the Sicilian black nobility, Papa is at the top of a crime pyramid composed of the following, completely interrelated set of operations on the island: left-wing terrorism, right-wing terrorism, the Mafia, drug-run-

ning, gun-running, smuggling guerrillas into the Middle East, and Sicilian separatism.

Papa's operations, and those of the Socialist Party, are financed heavily by Libya. They are in turn directed at the very top by the leading names in the Italian black nobility. One of the names prominently involved is that of the Venetian noble family of Luzzato. Richard Gardner, the American ambassador to Rome, is married to a Luzzato, and has been highly active throughout his term of appointment on behalf of Luzzato interests, among other things directing critical U.S. support to the PSI.

The Luzzatos cooperate intimately with the Sicilian nobility, particularly Count Spadafora, whose family ties to Venice date back at least to the 17th century. In the 1950s Spadafora was revealed to be the founder of the Sicilian separatist movement headed today by Michele Papa in his capacity as president of the Sicilian-Arab Friendship Association. Spadafora himself is better known as one of the founding members of Permin-dex, the assassination bureau that handled the murder of President Kennedy.

The Palestinian transcript

The man who turned the President's brother into a Libyan agent held a top secret meeting with three Palestinian terrorist leaders in Tripoli, Libya in September of 1978. The full transcript of this meeting exists today in the public domain. It was published in the Catania, Sicily newspaper *Espresso Sera*. The transcript of the meeting had apparently been secured by associates of the noted Italian magistrate, Judge Alessandrini, one of the most successful prosecutors of Italian terrorists, who was assassinated last year.

The transcript proves Papa's role as a controller and supplier of Libyan and Palestinian terrorism. Present at the meeting were Papa, the head of the Sicilian branch of the Italian Republican Party Mario Labisi, and three representatives of the Palestinian Liberation Organization's Libyan-dominated terrorist wing.

In a recorded conversation Papa and Labisi offer the Palestinians all necessary support, including a supply of trained terrorist guerrillas "to fight against Zionism." The following are some quotes from the transcript:

Labisi: "I am married to the Palestinian cause. With the help of noble people like Qaddafi, you will succeed in gaining victory, and it will be the victory of Qaddafi."

Papa: "If necessary our people will go fight together with the Palestinians. . . . If you want a corps of volunteers of one hundred . . . one hundred fifty. . . . two hundred persons, we can send them. We could send them to Libya and from there to Palestine. . . . Do you want fighters? Do you want doctors and nurses? I don't know what you prefer. . . ."

Labisi: "Other medicine will arrive in a short time,

because my party opened up fund collection centers. . . . in the whole island of Sicily. Not only I myself, but my party, the Republican Party, together with the Socialist Party. . . . are participating in the collection.”

The “Alpha Group” paradigm

The case of the so-called Alpha Group is an excellent case study of how the various cited criminal activities of Michele Papa and his circle are combined in one operation.

In 1973 Michele Papa joined forces with one of the top bosses of the Calabrian Mafia, Nino Badalamenti, and the networks of Prince Feltrinelli in order to relaunch Sicilian separatism and at the same time generate the capability for the recruitment of terrorist guerrillas for importation to all parts of the Mediterranean, including the Middle East. The Sicilian separatist movement, dormant since about 1950, was now to be revived with Libyan money under Michele Papa’s tutelage, according to his own public admission.

The networks of Prince Feltrinelli, who until his death was known to police agencies throughout the world as one of the top names in international terrorism, supplied a protégé for deployment into Sicily. This was Bernardino Andreola, who left for the island with a group of Italian left radicals to found “the Alpha Group.” Andreola years later would confess to the police that he and his radicals formed 42 propaganda cells and 18 armed terrorist cells. The propaganda cells organized the population around the slogan of freeing Sicily from Italian domination with the help of “Arab friends” who “are a great power and can aid the poor islanders to free themselves.”

This mass organizing was actually a screening process through which the more radical elements within the impoverished Sicilian population were passed on to the clandestine terrorist cells. Here they were trained in terrorist guerrilla tactics, such as the planting of bombs. All necessary weapons were supplied lavishly by Colonel Qaddafi through the island of Malta lying just south of Sicily. It is estimated that a full 75 percent of the Maltese budget is provided by the Libyan government.

The head of the Alpha Group, Andreola, also testified that he met with the top boss of the Calabrian mafia and Michele Papa in the course of the operation. The meetings occurred at the famous villa once owned by British Admiral Nelson in the 19th century and now often used by Papa as the scene of conferences with his Italian Socialist Party colleagues.

As the head of the Sicilian separatist movement, Papa played an intimate role in this Alpha operation, one of the earlier experiments to relaunch the movement. In 1978 he was under criminal investigation for these activities. Specifically, the police were investigating his illegal traffic in “immigrants” to Libya, which

was the cover used to transport the recruited guerrillas into Libya and from there to various points in the Mediterranean.

The Jan. 30, 1979 issue of the Italian magazine *Osservatore Politico* published the transcripts of one of Papa’s conversations with representatives from the Libyan-controlled wing of Palestinian-terrorism—the networks into which he was later to introduce Billy Carter. In that conversation Papa offered to supply guerrillas or anything else required. *Osservatore Politico* noted at the time that “many Sicilians are preparing to fight in the ranks of the Palestinian Liberation Organization in Lebanon without knowing it. The man who will send them there is Michele Papa.”

This was one of the final issues of the magazine published, because its publisher and editor was shortly thereafter murdered, as have been many magistrates and investigators who have tried to expose the black nobility’s Sicilian operations in the Mediterranean.

‘We kept the President informed. . . of course’

From an interview with Michele Papa in the Rome newspaper La Repubblica on July 30, 1980:

Q: Avvocato [the form of address to a lawyer], was it Qaddafi who suggested inviting Billy?

A: No. I have no need of suggestions; I’m not a Libyan agent. I was the one who took the initiative, even though I had to later submit it to the highest Libyan authorities.

Q: How did you contact the President’s brother?

A: One day an Atlanta entrepreneur came to Catania. He was Mario Lianza, the son of a contractor I had known for some time. He wanted to propose to me some business dealings with Libya, and I was supposed to accredit him. So, when I heard he was from Atlanta, I got an idea. I asked him if he knew the Carter family. He said yes. So I said to him: I have no problem in accrediting you with Libya. But you must bring Billy Carter to Tripoli for me. Lianza then returned to the U.S. and the contacts continued by phone. We had lengthy telephone conversations every night during which he tried to dissuade me. He even had an American senator, a Democrat, telephone me. But I repeated my position: either the President’s brother or no commercial deals with Libya.

Q: And how did you justify your demand?

A: I told Lianza that at that point in time—it was June of

1978—that optimal relations did not exist between Tripoli and Washington, at least at the political level, and that we had to try to improve relations. Finally one night Lianza said to me, “Our friend is ready to visit Libya, but he doesn’t know what he’s supposed to accomplish there.” I said to him, it could just be a friendship visit, and also to take advantage of his farming experience.

Q: How was the visit organized?

A: First I went to the U.S., and later, from Rome, came Gabriel Shallouf, an important Libyan diplomat. A month was taken up in agreeing on the itinerary of the visit and the composition of the delegation. Finally Billy, together with experts and his escort, arrived in Rome. We met at the Hilton, and immediately afterward left together for Tripoli. The Americans stayed in Libya for ten days. They visited all the agricultural works and drew up a long report. There were meetings at the American embassy and other manifestations of cordiality. The Libyan people were enthusiastic over the friendship of Billy Carter.

Q: Was there a meeting with Qaddafi?

A: I don’t know if there was an official one, but I think there was a discussion.

Q: And President Carter?

A: Naturally he was informed of everything.

Q: Everything ended there?

A: No. A Libyan delegation led by Foreign Minister Hamed Shahati stayed two months in the U.S. in an exchange visit. Billy always accompanied the delegation. Another relationship developed, and he urged the Libyans to purchase machinery and cement.

Q: And at the end did he receive compensation?

A: A very modest compensation, which he absolutely did not want to accept. I had to recite to him verses from the Koran to convince him and he, the poor guy, finally accepted, partly because for three months he had neglected his own affairs.

Q: Who leaked the whole thing?

A: It was Mario Lianza in an interview to an American newspaper. Then the Zionists mounted a scandal. They had already protested during the U.S. visit of the Libyan delegation. Libya, as is known, is favorable to the Palestinians, and this issue too had been the subject of a discussion with Billy Carter, just as many other issues had been discussed. But this is old news dredged up to create difficulties for the American President. I am sure, however, that [Jimmy] Carter will deal with it very well. At bottom, what harm was there?

Savama agents in Washington

by Robert Dreyfuss

Evidence pieced together since the murder of Ali Akbar Tabatabai, the anti-Khomeini Iranian who chaired the Iran Freedom Foundation, has uncovered the existence of a semi-official network of Iran secret police agents in the United States. The assassination of Tabatabai, according to numerous Iranian sources, was ordered by the regime of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran, and it was carried out by Savama, the highly secret intelligence organization of Khomeini’s regime.

The ringleader of Savama in the United States, according to Iranian sources, is Dr. Cyrus Hashemi of 9 West 57th Street in New York City. Along with his brother Reza Hashemi, Cyrus Hashemi—who is president of the First Gulf Bank and Trust, Ltd.—controls a network of businesses that include International Inter-trade, the Arabian Trading Co., ITC Ltd., the First Arabian Bank and Trust, and others.

Hashemi, who has told NSIPS that he is an associate and close adviser to Iran’s President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, is also a friend of Dr. Ibrahim Yazdi, the U.S. citizen who served as Iran’s foreign minister in 1979, and who is presently an intelligence adviser to Ayatollah Khomeini. In 1979, Yazdi reportedly asked Hashemi to become Iran’s commerce minister, although he did not take the post.

According to Iranian sources, Hashemi is the chief organizer of Savama in the United States. Among his responsibilities is the provision of funds to Savama fronts in the United States via branches of his corporate entities in the Bahamas, Western Europe, and the Persian Gulf. In addition, Hashemi is also responsible for providing the Khomeini regime with counterintelligence on the activities of anti-Khomeini groups in the United States, and as such Hashemi would have had direct responsibility for monitoring the work of Tabatabai and the Iran Freedom Foundation.

For this purpose, Hashemi has reportedly hired Captain Siamak Dayhimi, a former fleet commander with the Iranian navy, who is not on leave from Khomeini’s armed forces, and who is still being paid a salary by Iran. Captain Dayhimi is the specialist assigned to gather information and monitor the activities