

Report from Rome by Antonio Gaspari

The terrorism of the green brigades

The "official" environmentalists deny all connection to the May 29 bombings. Police investigators disagree.

Four bombs went off in rapid succession on the night of May 29, hitting the offices of Montedison, Shell, and Vedril, all plants involved in chemical production, in the vicinity of Milan. Structural damages are estimated at some 12 billion liras (nearly \$9 million), to which the costs of a shutdown of production would have to be added.

The probable authors of the terrorist action sent an anonymous letter to ANSA press agency in which they wrote: "To dynamite, death is the greatest joy of life. We experienced it by hitting Montedison at its headquarters in Foro Bonaparte [Milan], its Selm energy plant at the Vedril factory in Rho, and its racist sister Shell in Via Londonio. We shall not stop here. We will take other pleasures. Our imagination is learning to be incandescent."

The missive is signed with the anarchist symbol of an A enclosed inside a circle.

Investigators and law enforcement forces are, however, convinced that the entire action responds to a single ideology—environmentalism. All the plants which were hit, in fact, have been victims of sabotage and hostile demonstration by the Italian Green movement for quite a while.

The first two bombings took place at around 2:15 a.m. at the Shell Italia office in Milan. The bulletproof windows were shattered, and besides the ceiling and the dividing walls, two automobiles parked inside were destroyed. Less than 15 minutes later, the office of the president of Montedison was struck by the explosion of a

bomb made up of 200 grams of mine powder, compressed into metal pipes.

Meanwhile, at about 3:00 a.m. the same night, three bombs blew up the electrical substation which provides energy for the Vedril factory in Rho, an industrial burg near Milan.

Only the rapid intervention of the firefighters and security forces of the company kept the flames from spreading to the warehouses where a good 1,500 tons of acetone cyanohydrin are stored. This would have produced a volatile cloud of poisonous cyanide gas, if it had come into contact with the flames.

Vedril is a company of the Montedison conglomerate which has about 600 employees, and produces the plastic material called vedril which is used in various automaking and construction sectors. It has been a target of the environmentalists for some time.

Last May 1, unknown persons destroyed the electrical generator of the division where velite is produced, causing major damage to production. About a year ago, on June 19, 1988, a huge fire developed inside the factory, which was probably caused by arson.

The Environment and Labor Association, which is Socialist-Communist in political background, and enjoys the collaboration of the research office of the Milan CGIL, the Communist-tied trade union federation, published in November 1988 an "Environment Dossier" with a list of companies they judged as polluters. Vedril is singled out in the list as a heavy polluter.

The fourth bomb blew up a high-tension electricity tower which linked

Agrimont, in the town of Farigliano, and Acna, in the town of Cengio. Both companies belong to Montedison.

In this case, too, the bombers showed themselves to be highly skilled. They sawed off the steel uprights of the energy tower and then ignited the plastic explosive, which went off a short time afterward. The bombing took place at 5 a.m. and kindled a violent fire.

As far as Acna is concerned, this is only the latest act of a series of violent sabotage actions carried out by environmentalists who are determined to shut down the plant. One month ago the Carabinieri, Italy's military police, surprised a group of 11 individuals belonging to the "Association for the Rebirth of Bormida Valley," a local Greenie group, after they had sabotaged a pump that served to collect liquid waste to channel it into a purifier. The action, organized by the environmentalists, had the aim of "proving" that Acna pollutes.

Although the parliamentarians of the Green faction deny all connections to these terrorist actions, law enforcement investigators are sure that the new terrorism is organized inside the eco-peacenik movement and uses environmentalist rhetoric as the cover for its own actions.

Besides, it is well known that the hard core of the Green movement is made up of members of the dissolved Maoist group *Lotta Continua*, "Continuing Struggle," which was recently investigated for the unsolved, early-1970s assassination of Milan Police Commissioner Luigi Calabresi. Former *Lotta Continua* leader Marco Boato, now a Green senator, started his political career in the University of Trento, together with individuals who later became leaders of the Red Brigades, like convicted murderer Renato Curcio.