

Report from Rome by Antonio Gaspari and Lorenza Saini

The 'Seven Sisters' and ecology

*Guess who benefits from Italy's rejection of nuclear energy?
Guess who funded the anti-nuclear propaganda campaign?*

As reported by this column last week, the Anglo-American oil multinationals were dubbed the "Seven Sisters" by Italian state-sector industrialist Enrico Mattei. For resisting their control, Mattei was murdered in 1962—a crime officially unsolved to this day.

Standard Oil, later Esso (Exxon), always had a dominant role in Italy. In 1948-50 it funded the centrist parties in the ruling coalition. Starting in the 1960s, the left-wing parties began to enjoy also Esso financing. Between the first center-left coalition of 1963 and 1973, the center-left parties (Republicans, Socialists, Social Democrats, Christian Democrats) and individual political leaders of these parties pocketed some \$48 million.

To evade fiscal controls, Esso invoiced an Italian oil resupply company, Moratti's Rasiom, for sums larger than those actually spent. The home office in New Jersey deposited a special fund for "conducting secret finances" into the current account of Vincenzo Cazzaniga, who was in charge of the Italian branch. Cazzaniga's note to the home office on Dec. 3, 1964 stressed that these funds were "to pay all those who can promote the interests of the company." In exchange, Esso would benefit from tax loopholes and tax postponements. "The net savings to our company from these fiscal benefits," says an internal Exxon letter dated Jan. 14, 1972, "was \$89.4 million every four months."

Beginning in the mid-1970s, the Rockefeller oil/financial group shifted its political interests to the Green-

ecologist groups. The Rockefeller Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and Rockefeller Family Fund poured \$9,750,000 in 1979 alone into the coffers of ecologist groups and their ilk.

In 1987, the Greens staged a referendum to change the nuclear regulatory law. After an incredible media scare campaign in the wake of the Chernobyl accident, the referendum passed. Italy not only stopped building new nuclear plants, but has even shut down the existing ones, which should not have been affected by the vote. So today, Italy is the most dependent of all industrialized countries on imported petroleum.

Prior to the referendum, Italian Esso funded the publication of *Who's Who of the Environment* by Italy's three biggest environment lobbies: Italia Nostra, Lega per l'Ambiente (Environment League), and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). Esso then cozied up to the Greens, above all the Environment League, the group close to the Marxist Socialist and Communist Parties, and its magazine, *La Nuova Ecologia*. This crowd, together with Esso, set up a prize contest for the ten best doctoral theses on preserving environmental balances and health. It is not known how much Esso spent for these initiatives and for advertising them in the Greenie magazines.

The links between the Rockefeller group and the "Environment League" run through World Watch Institute, a Rockefeller-funded outfit, whose members hold meetings and publish annual reports such as *Ambiente Ital-*

ia, (*Environment Italy*) in full collaboration with the Environment League. It also turns out that Eugene McGraher, director of the WWF in the U.S.A., is president of Exxon Chemicals.

The latest effort of the Italian WWF to shut down the economy and get people killed, is a phony "save our rivers" campaign. The WWF has issued a *River Dossier* which attacks "the terrible problem of cementification," alleging that Italy's "natural riverbanks are being replaced by blankets of cement, blocks of artificial material or by masses, often contained within wire mesh." The dossier denounces flood prevention as "almost always a pretext," and rails that "billions in public funds are appropriated every year" to build these "ugly blankets of cement."

The various Green groups have organized a national monitoring of waterways with the intent of accusing everyone who removes sand, gravel, or other materials deposited by the rivers, of the crime of destroying natural beauty and aggravated continuous harm to the environment. In fact, extracting gravel has the important function of eliminating the materials that water drags with it, raising the level of the river bed. This cleanup helps to keep the river inside its bed.

The Environment League and WWF filed charges against the Po River Authority for "cementification" and malfeasance in office, for having tried to remove trees and other materials in the vicinity of a bridge. The works were shut down for a year and a half, and disastrous flooding resulted.

Funny thing. The Italian Communist Party always claims to be worried about the influence of U.S. forces in Italy. Why don't they ever denounce the ties between the ecologist organizations and Anglo-American financial groups?