

Italian assassination puts spotlight on Kissinger again

by Umberto Pascali

On March 12, around 10 a.m., just outside Palermo, Sicily, the car carrying European parliamentarian Salvo Lima to his office was approached by a motorcycle at a crossroads. The two men on the motorcycle, their faces hidden by helmets, shot at the tires. Lima tried to flee from the car, maybe already wounded, but was reached by the killers after a few yards and was finished off with a shot to the back of his neck. A few weeks before one of the most crucial national elections in Italy, the assassination of the most important Sicilian politician risks plunging the country into a new maelstrom of instability.

Salvo Lima, a leader of the Italian ruling party, the Christian Democracy, was a close ally of Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti and the man who guaranteed the vote-getting machine on the island and in southern Italy for him. The main Anglo-American media and other Italian political assets of the international banking clique—like the head of the Republican Party, the Sicilian Giorgio La Malfa—came out immediately with the line that this crime was “internal to the mafia.” But as an extremely well-informed observer in Rome put it: “This is a mafia crime like the assassination of Aldo Moro was a terrorist crime.”

As regular *EIR* readers know, the Italian statesman Moro was kidnaped officially by the Red Brigades, but investigations point to the role of Henry Kissinger, who had repeatedly pressured Aldo Moro to abandon his design of creating a broad coalition government to give stability to Italy and to lay the basis for a policy of independence from the Yalta accords.

Already on March 12, pro-Anglo-American outlets put out the line of an “internal mafia” crime. The usually ductile Andreotti for once reacted strongly, recalling two past attempts to kill Lima. Lima himself used to say that as a politician he shook many hands and he may have shaken the hands of mafiosi, but that the mafia had always found in him a real enemy, not an apparent one.

Andreotti, in an article in the weekly *Europeo*, reported something the professional journalists had forgotten: The young Lima was a friend of President John F. Kennedy, and had been invited to take part in the Kennedy campaign during his tenure as mayor of Palermo. He did so, wrote Andreotti, “with one of those slogans that characterize the Americans:

‘A young Italian mayor for a young U.S. President.’” Reading Andreotti’s allusion to Kennedy, many recalled the dramatic polemics that raged in the Italian press while Andreotti was preparing his New York trip: Both conservative and leftist media had demanded investigations of the role of Kissinger in the Moro case under the headline, “Moro Like Kennedy!”

“Less than 24 hours before the Palermo murder, Henry Kissinger had slyly attacked Andreotti,” wrote the Catholic magazine *Il Sabato* shortly after the assassination. *Il Sabato* was reporting the conclusions of an informal emergency summit of the leaders of the Party of the Democratic Left (PDS, the former Communist Party) and obviously shared those conclusions. In fact, during the assassination, Andreotti was in New York, where he met Kissinger at a ceremony for the presentation of the prime minister’s latest book in English translation.

Andreotti has been the target of several threats and, after he announced a policy that reminds many of Moro’s, including the quest for an independent oil policy, it is possible that the meeting with Kissinger was a way to make sure that history did not repeat itself. Apparently Kissinger had accepted a *modus vivendi*. During a joint press conference in New York, he stated with an ambivalent smile: “I understood that one shouldn’t go after Andreotti.” At that moment, the killers of Salvo Lima were already preparing the ambush.

The assassination took place while Andreotti was engaged in another political showdown. His adversary is another—at least formally—Christian Democratic politician: the President of Italy, Francesco Cossiga. Cossiga, an admirer of George Bush, was the interior, police) minister in Italy during the Aldo Moro kidnaping in 1978. Nominally part of the Moro wing of the party, Cossiga was in charge of the investigations that were conducted under the operational direction of the chief of the U.S. State Department anti-terrorist unit, Stephen Piecznik. Those investigations—as the magistracy found out later—were done in a way that made it almost impossible to find the prison where Moro was kept prisoner. Eleonora Moro, the widow, had very harsh words for her husband’s former protégé and has refused to have any contact with him.

He who touches Gladio dies

What is the reason for the Andreotti-Cossiga clash, besides the fact that both are candidates for the next six-year presidential term? It has to do with different evaluations of the so-called Gladio organization.

Gladio, or Stay Behind, is a secret paramilitary network established by the Anglo-American intelligence services in the postwar period with the purpose, at least officially, to prepare for armed resistance if the territory were invaded by the Soviet Army. But a growing number of magistrates, investigators, journalists, and politicians have argued that Gladio, far from having been a defensive structure, was the

center of 20 and more years of subversion that took the form of armed—left or right—terrorism, mafia-like activities, and so on.

The real aim of Gladio and similar organizations present in other NATO countries was not defense, but to guarantee that the country would remain “under control”—in this case, under Anglo-American control.

With the collapse of the Soviet empire, the secret network, established on the basis of unconstitutional and extra-parliamentary protocols, had no reason to exist. When, in 1990—thanks to a few courageous journalists (later crucified by Cossiga and the media) like Ennio Remondino of TG1 television news—a scandal exploded, Andreotti admitted the existence of the secret structure, and sent sensitive documents to the parliamentary committee investigating several terrorist massacres. The cabinet finally decided to form a committee including all the living former presidents of the Constitutional Court, to give a final evaluation on the legitimacy of Gladio.

On Dec. 7, 1990 (the “black Friday of the Republic”) President Cossiga, whose career is intertwined from the outset with Gladio, threatened a constitutional crisis. Either the government recognized the legitimacy of Gladio, he said, or he would suspend himself from his position.

Andreotti was forced to dissolve the committee and to write a personal letter to Cossiga to “reassure” him. On Dec. 13, the secretary of Christian Democracy, Arnaldo Forlani, commented before the party executive, speaking of a plot organized by some “non-political forces with the participation of foreign secret services.”

In vain, Sen. Libero Gualtieri, the chairman of the parliamentary committee on massacres, protested the lack of cooperation in the investigations. “I am sick and tired of this Gualtieri,” Cossiga told journalists when the committee asked for more time to investigate. Although Parliament had voted an extension, Cossiga refused to ratify it for months. When forced to shut down the activities of his committee, Gualtieri prepared a final document that declared Gladio “illegal” from the beginning.

Finally the Party of the Democratic Left (PDS) asked for Cossiga’s impeachment. In reaction, the President did something that risked a head-on clash between part of the Army and a large part of the population. On Nov. 30, in a speech at the military school of Velletri, Cossiga appealed directly to the military police: “Carabinieri, you are the ones who have to judge me.” A large chunk of the military establishment distanced themselves from a Carabinieri “trade union” that issued a document threatening: “Do not try our patience.”

More recently, the fight over Gladio has claimed new victims. A well-respected military judge from Padua, Benedetto Roberti, who was investigating Gladio, was removed and put under investigation for violation of secrecy. In February investigative journalist Gianni Cipriani, former Sen. Ser-

gio Flamigni, and others were interrogated and accused of being the recipients of information considered secret.

Finally, in the weeks preceding the murder of Salvo Lima, there was an increase in apparently blind violence, claimed by an unknown “Armed Phalange.” Documents were stolen from the Senate safes relating to the inquiry into the Banca Nazionale del Lavoro in Atlanta, Georgia. Documents were also stolen relating to the explosion of a civilian airplane over the island of Ustica. Newspapers, ministers, and congressmen pursuing this track received increasing numbers of threats. In Castellammare di Stabia near Naples, a PDS councilman was assassinated by unknown killers.

One week before Lima’s murder, Cossiga attacked Andreotti during a high-level NATO meeting in Brussels, for having revealed the existence of the secret structure to the “massacres” committee. Then came the murder of Lima.

‘Mafia’ or the real mafia?

But the assassination of Lima was only phase one of the plan. It was to be followed by a media campaign on “connections between mafia and politics” aimed at Andreotti, to smash the Christian Democracy and to catapult into the majority parties like the Italian Republican Party of Giorgio La Malfa, and the Leagues, a series of local slates based on demagoguery, a program of chauvinism, and support for “strongman” Cossiga. This would be the basis for a “presidential government,” a way for the Anglo-Americans to replace an old asset with a new one.

Everything was ready for the big media show. A “repentant” mafioso working for the FBI, Tommaso Buscetta, popped up to announce that he had decided to reveal what he knows of contacts between the mafia and politicians in Italy (of course, his revelations were not going to touch the fact that the mafia was reestablished after the war by the U.S. Office of Strategic Services and British intelligence).

Cossiga, who at the time of the murder was at NATO headquarters in Brussels, refused to go to Lima’s funeral, stating: “Let’s not exaggerate with these theories of the attack against the state. The mark of the mafia seems overwhelming. It is a fight for a division of votes.”

For a moment the game was unclear. But the ravings of La Malfa, whose family has been linked to Anglo-American banks for two generations, were not enough to create the atmosphere. To launch “corruption” hysteria against the selected target it was necessary to get the collaboration of the second biggest party, the PDS. Some of the PDS top leaders met to decide on their course of action on March 12. According to *Il Sabato’s* reconstruction of the discussion, they concluded that the current goings-on are part of a broad plan of destabilization.

Kissinger’s name and his reported attack on Andreotti in New York popped up prominently. “From that moment on, the discussion focused on the coincidence of important his-

torical moments and international interference. . . . The decision is that the secretary, Achille Occhetto, should go to the Parliament and set off an alarm against the possible return of the 'strategy of tension' linked to an international interference," reported *Il Sabato*.

The next day the PDS paper *Unità* ran the headline, "A Crime Decided Abroad."

Andreotti explained to the press that the murder could fit into a strategy aimed at launching "totalitarian adventures of new republics. There could be a secret political desire, not for a democratic reform but for a dictatorial reform, because democracy would be an obstacle to efficiency." Andreotti, wrote the magazine *Avvenimenti*, was talking about the "ideology of the Trilateral Commission, a powerful and still mysterious international masonic center close to the circles of CIA."

Interview: Vittorio Sbardella

Salvo Lima was killed for political motives

One week after the murder of Salvo Lima, the U.S. Embassy in Rome targeted the politician closest to him: Congressman Vittorio Sbardella, Prime Minister Andreotti's "lieutenant" in Rome. Lima shared Sbardella's Rome office and his warm support for the *governissimo*, a potential coalition including all the major parties, similar to that launched by Aldo Moro in 1978. "The hypothesis of a U.S. plan in a destabilizing plot connected to the recent, tragic events that took place in Italy is absurd and ridiculous," read the U.S. Embassy's press release.

The *casus belli* was an interview in which Mr. Sbardella had said, among other things, "The Americans do not hide their hostility toward European unity, especially since the end of communism. After all, this recent Pentagon document that wants to prevent the creation of a new superpower that might overshadow the U.S., seems to me eloquent enough." (The reference is to the Wolfowitz report, described in *EIR*'s March 20 issue, p. 40.)

"The embassy folks only read the headlines," Sbardella told *EIR*. But listening to Sbardella describing his bold program to solve the political and economic crisis of Italy, one can understand all too well why the embassy—and not only the embassy—feels irked.

First: "The Yalta system is in my opinion totally obsolete,

and thus the political outlook in Italy changes, including a possible governing alliance even with the PDS," the ex-communists. "Lima's actions were in harmony with my position and thus, whoever hit him obviously believed also they were weakening this political line, i.e., the involvement of political forces which have been excluded out of foreign policy considerations. Lima's murder is no internal mafia affair, it is a political act. It could have been done by the mafia but with political aims."

Second: "We live in war economy situation. We must solve the problem of the public debt by every means, including the most drastic. We must go in the direction of a freeze, a debt moratorium, domestically and internationally, meanwhile trying to take steps to sharply reduce the debt.

"From international financial institutions like the IMF, whose position is reflected by Mr. Giorgio La Malfa, come constant demands for cuts and austerity. This only leads to destabilization and unemployment. This forces the country to turn in on itself. Italy needs policies of expansion, exactly the contrary of what La Malfa says. So we need a government representing every popular force and hence able to resist any outside pressure, and to implement this project of moratorium and economic development.

"The danger is that we tighten our belts and solve nothing; that we keep paying interest and so increase the debt despite all the squeezing; that we carry out a policy which is against the people, yet we do not solve the problem. I say that the problem must be eliminated."

Third: "If Italy set an example of how to put an end to these austerity and credit squeeze policies, then its example could spread to all of Europe. We must implement the program that was proposed by Deutsche Bank chairman Alfred Herrhausen! Take the countries of the former East bloc. Unbridled super-free-marketism, such as what economist Jeffrey Sachs pushes, can only kill the market, because it does not allow the production of national goods. The market is choked by foreign products, and even the hope to have a market dies out. And this means the coming of the real mafia. These countries which have just freed themselves from communism must be protected. Both we Europeans and the Americans face this problem. If we act in the right way, there will be room for development policies, and we will create a market in those countries. Otherwise, we will keep those countries from growing."

Fourth: "Yes, it is true there was an altercation between Kissinger and Moro and threats from Kissinger. I would say that there is an unscrupulous use of the U.S. role as the leading country on Kissinger's part."

Asked whether doesn't it seem ironic to him that in 1983, when a judge tried to serve Kissinger with a summons to testify on the threats to Moro, Kissinger fled from Italian law enforcement by taking refuge in the U.S. Embassy in Rome, Sbardella responded: "Yes, it is true, that's exactly what happened, but please do not ask me to comment."