

# Gardner interferes in Italy

Last week we reported on U.S. ambassador to Italy Richard Gardner's statement that the European Monetary System must be subordinated to the International Monetary Fund, and his threat to destabilize Italy if the Communist Party were allowed to enter the Andreotti government. The Oxford-trained Gardner, who helped precipitate the fall of the government by the latter threat, has now intervened once again into Italian affairs, by giving an interview to the Milan daily *Corriere della Sera*, Feb. 4, in which he said that Italy must accept a stand-by credit from the International Monetary Fund, hold down the cost of labor, reduce worker mobility, and stop government interference in the industrial sector, in order to maintain technological exchange agreements with the U.S.

Behind the brash — and offensive — Gardner interventions is a fight over whether Italy will proceed with its intention to join the European Monetary System, or revert to its frequent role as an ally of British financial forces on the Continent. The interventions by Gardner come as Italian Prime Minister-designate Giulio Andreotti begins a process that has taken place 41 times since the end of World War II: consultations with the major parties for the purpose of putting together a new cabinet. The penalty for failure is something no sane Italian

wants: special elections to break the present deadlock between the two biggest parties, the Christian Democrats (DC) and the Communists (PCI). Regularly scheduled elections won't occur until 1981; early elections would mean a still longer period of chaos and an effectively nonexistent government.

Ostensibly at issue between the PCI and the Christian Democrats is the Communists' demand to be represented in the new cabinet, a demand which the DC has always in the past found some way of avoiding through political compromise. The PCI at this point, however, has been provoked into intransigence on the question — which leaves the party leadership vulnerable to the sort of posturing which found its latest expression in an editorial in the party daily *L'Unità* of Feb. 6. PCI Directorate member Alfredo Reichlin blames the spread of the "male oscuro" — the mysterious virus which has killed 56 infants in Naples — on the state industrial holding company IRI, the banks, the government — in short, on capitalism. This despite the editorial one day previously in the same newspaper by the party's number two man, Gerardo Chiaromonte, who said that the PCI would "never do (its) enemies the favor" of "dreaming of a socialist Italy, or predicating the revolution, (while being) incapable of ... fighting concretely to

transform reality."

The DC is showing signs of even more severe schizophrenia. Party general secretary Zaccagnini has won a majority for the line of the late Aldo Moro, the "emergency policy" of national unity and cooperation with the PCI. The so-called "friends of Zaccagnini," supporters of this policy, met on Feb. 4 and released statements aimed at mollifying the Communists. DC party "Foreign Minister" Luigi Granelli warned of the serious consequences of a situation in which either the PCI or the DC was forced to the opposition, and urged a re-examination of DC methods and policies.

The intervention of Gardner into this delicate situation is intended to freeze the two sides' negotiating positions, undermining the chances for Andreotti to find a governmental formula based on cooperation with the PCI that will allow him to continue his own pro-EMS policies, and opening the door for a pro-IMF government more to Gardner's liking.

The cost of policies such as those espoused by Gardner is already being paid by the residents of Naples who have lost 56 infants to the "male oscuro" — the "incurable" dark disease as it has been dubbed. The epidemic is now spreading south, aided by the wretched nutrition and sanitation conditions in the backward Mezzogiorno.