

Catholic, 'New Age' forces battle for control of Italian government

by Leonardo Servadio

In the weeks following the June 14 Italian elections, a fight broke out between the Vatican daily *Osservatore Romano*, and socialist former Prime Minister Bettino Craxi. Craxi scolded the Church for having interfered in political affairs during the electoral campaign, and also lashed out against the judiciary of Florence in the wake of the indictments of a number of members of Craxi's Italian Socialist Party. Craxi said he will "take care of" the magistrates, in a tone it would be hard not to consider threatening.

Osservatore Romano replied by writing that the Church will not allow itself to be gagged and criticized Craxi's attitude toward the judiciary.

This clash between Craxi and the Catholic world is not some internal Italian affair, but the Italian reflection of a larger war in which Russia and Wall Street's "Project Democracy" crowd, now notorious for selling arms to Khomeini in the illegal "Oliver North" operation, are on the same side. The other side is most strongly represented in Italy by the anti-malthusian, pro-economic growth faction in the Catholic Church.

These are the forces battling for control over the newly formed government of Christian Democrat Giovanni Goria. Not counting the caretaker government of Amintore Fanfani, instituted after Craxi fell last March, the Goria cabinet is the first one headed by a premier from the Catholic party since Craxi began his three-and-a-half year rule in 1983. Before that, since 1947, the Christian Democracy, Italy's largest party, had headed all of Italy's postwar coalition governments.

The Goria government is coming into being in the wake of the Church's recent statements against international usury, and only a few weeks after the Pope received Austria's President Waldheim, at the very moment when U.S. policy was working to alienate Austria from the West and throw it into the arms of Moscow. Needless to say, not all nominally Catholic forces are with the Pope against Moscow and Project Democracy. Christian Democrat Giulio Andreotti, who returns as foreign minister in the Goria government, and the Vatican Secretary of State Agostino Casaroli and his aide Silvestrini, are emphatically on the side of the Iran-Contra "secret government" and its plans for a "New Yalta" redivision of the world with the Soviet empire.

The Church was indeed active during the electoral campaign. It called upon Catholics to defend basic moral values and stressed that this is also done through the ballot box.

A vexed Craxi sidled up to the Italian Green Party and the Radicals, and started talking up the idea of a "lay-socialist" bloc that would include those two parties—best known in Italy for dressing up as clowns or American Indians and promoting referendums to liberalize divorce, legalize abortion, uphold "gay rights," and ban nuclear power—in short, to peddle every imaginable evil of the "New Age" counter-culture which has been unleashed to destroy Western industrial civilization.

The Socialist Party repeatedly pressured Italy's new premier, Giovanni Goria, to include the two fringe parties in his cabinet. Goria said no, emphasizing that the party of Cicciolina—the Hungarian prostitute who headed the Radical slate—could not enter the coalition. It is likely that the Socialists, the strongest of the Christian Democrats' coalition partners, only agreed to keep the Green-Radical lunatics out of the government in return for a *quid pro quo*—a promise to hold an anti-nuclear referendum as soon as possible.

It was the Socialist Party which relaunched anti-nuclear politics in Italy, after Claudio Martelli, Craxi's "fair-haired boy" and the number-two man in the party, went to get his political line from Willy Brandt at the German Social Democracy's congress last year. Ironically, the Socialists and Radicals have been the big pushers of referendums, even though both have delegations in Parliament, which has the function of proposing legislation. The referendum was designed to be the instrument of those who have no such representation. The misuse of the referendum, above all as a weapon against industrial development, is aimed at unhooking the nation's growth potential and corroding its institutions.

Bringing the Communists in

Not only has Craxi launched an alliance with the Greens and Radicals, but he has pulled the Social Democratic Party, notoriously linked to "Project Democracy" in the United States, into the pact. The strategy toward the Communist Party appears to complement this.

At the Communist Party's post-election Central Com-

mittee meeting of June 27, the old guard of party secretary Giorgio Napolitano was ousted for its failed strategy of trying to sneak the Communist Party into the government by following a "national" line. The national executive committee was cut from nine people to five, and Achille Occhetto, a Gorbachov man, was voted in as vice secretary. He will become party chief by the end of the year.

Socialist leader Martelli and Communist leader Occhetto then granted a *joint* interview to the weekly *Espresso*, in which they affably discussed the possibility of one big "left" party in Italy, including the Greens and Radicals along with the Communists and Socialists.

The creation of a "dissent bloc" inside the Italian Communist Party—the largest in the West and Italy's second-biggest party despite electoral slippage—clearly works as the driver for setting up this Italian "rainbow coalition," whose only real function is to attack the Church. The scenarios by which the Communists could get into the government are various: a split in which a "left" and "right" party emerges; or, in not-unlikely early elections, a hemorrhage of Communist votes into Craxi's party. Both scenarios would produce the indispensable prerequisite for the "lay bloc" to take over the government: a scaled-down Communist Party, kept "under control" by the Socialists, which would become the biggest left party.

How much Moscow is in on this game can be seen in the *Pravda* commentaries wishfully predicting a very short life for the Goria government, in the hopes of eroding further the independence of the Italian Catholic world.

The Marcinkus case

Such schemes may have been set back when the Italian Supreme Court recently absolved Archbishop Paul Marcinkus for the financial scandal around the Banco Ambrosiano and the Vatican-linked Istitute per le Opere di Religione (IOR), after a months-long campaign of attacks on the Vatican. The anti-Marcinkus drive was launched by the self-styled "lay" print media which used the case as a political weapon to discredit the Church.

The Marcinkus case came back into the limelight exactly *one day* after Brazil had declared a moratorium on its foreign debt last February. Brazilian President José Sarney, in announcing the measure, relied heavily upon the document put out by Vatican's "Justitia et Pax" commission, which attacked the policy of enslaving Third World countries by means of conditions on credit, and explicitly named the International Monetary Fund.

This issue—defiance of the International Monetary Fund—defines precisely where Prime Minister Giovanni Goria would have his best chance to keep his cabinet from sinking with the rotting hulk of "Irangate." When then-Brazilian Finance Minister Dilson Funaro came to Italy last March, then-Treasury Minister Goria supported Brazil's debt moratorium.

The meteoric rise of Gen. V.N. Lobov

by Rachel Douglas

Expect to hear a lot more about V.N. Lobov, a Soviet military officer who currently has the rank of general colonel (three-star general) and is first deputy chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces. He has zoomed to the upper echelon of the Soviet military leadership in as short a time as any of the new generation of the Soviet high command, schooled under Marshal Nikolai V. Ogarkov. Like Ogarkov, he is a specialist in strategic deception.

The elevation of General Lobov to the post of first deputy chief of staff became known in April 1987. Already on June 15, he was dispatched on a sensitive diplomatic assignment—to Syria. He conferred with Syrian Minister of Defense Tlas and Chief of Staff Shehabi, being the highest-level Soviet representative on the scene as a major Middle East crisis began to boil in the Persian Gulf.

On June 28, less than a fortnight after his return from Syria, Lobov published a lengthy article in the Soviet military daily *Krasnaya Zvezda*. From this officer, who for the previous three years commanded the land-locked Central Asian Military District, Russian military readers received an authoritative treatise on the importance of *naval* operations in the global strategic showdown.

Complaining particularly about the global reach of United States aircraft carrier groups, Lobov admonished, "The world's oceans are turning more and more into the starting point for the unleashing of aggression against the Soviet Union . . . and into a springboard from which a first nuclear strike will be launched." He did not, naturally, say anything about such developments as the stepped-up deployment of Soviet Delta Class ballistic missile submarines, not to mention Victor Class and Alpha Class subs armed with cruise missiles, off the U.S. coast; or the Soviet Navy's acquisition of two more Typhoon Class and four of the new Delta-IV Class strategic ballistic missile submarines, just in the past two years.

General Lobov zeroed in on current events: "Particular alarm is caused these days by the expansion of the American naval presence in the Persian Gulf and the northern part of the Arabian Sea. Using the shelling of the frigate Stark as a pretext, Washington has sent additional warships into an already explosive region, is keeping the carrier Constellation on combat standby in the region, is threatening to strike against Iran, and is seeking the right to base its aircraft on the