

Half-truths on Moro kidnap on German TV

by Paolo Raimondi

On Feb. 19, German television viewers watching a program on the 1978 kidnapping and assassination of Italian Christian Democratic party chairman Aldo Moro must have been stunned to hear that the statesman might have been eliminated by a "conspiracy," ranging from Henry Kissinger to "parallel" networks of the secret services. Everybody seeing this program on the Hesse 3 channel must have asked: If this is true for the Moro case, might it also be valid for prominent German assassination victims Hanns-Martin Schleyer and Alfred Herrhausen?

The program, which was produced by a Westdeutsche Rundfunk team and aired by the WDR network on Nov. 28, 1993, opened by reporting that Kissinger had made repeated threats against Moro and his policy. Moro's widow, Eleonora, testifying in court in 1983, reported the fears that her husband had confided to her after his meeting in Washington with Secretary of State Kissinger. Kissinger told Moro, who was then Italian foreign minister: "Sir, it is better that you cease carrying out your political plan to involve all the political forces of your country in a direct collaboration. Either you stop it, or you are going to pay dearly. It is up to you."

Moro was so shocked by this exchange that he felt sick and, uncharacteristically, he reported the incident to his wife and told his personal secretary that he was considering leaving politics for a few years. In September 1974, a week before Moro's visit to the United States, Kissinger advised President Gerald Ford to admit that the United States had intervened in Chile over 1970-73 to overthrow Salvador Allende. "We have done what the United States does to defend its interest abroad," Kissinger said. In his memoirs, Kissinger did not hide his dislike for Moro and his policy of national unity. He caustically wrote in his book *The White House Years*, that "the powerful Moro was preparing in his indirect, almost imperceptible manner the fundamental changes that were to bring the Communist Party close to the seats of power while the Christian Democrats were seeking to pull its revolutionary sting."

Moro's national unity plan

Aldo Moro's "national unity" policy envisaged the creation of a government in Italy which involved all the mass-

based parties around a policy to protect national sovereignty and independence. This implied the involvement of Italy's second-largest electoral force, the Italian Communist Party (PCI) of Enrico Berlinguer, who was leading the party out of Moscow's sphere of influence. The plan was a continuation of the policy for national independence of Enrico Mattei, the head of the Italian state oil firm ENI who was killed in 1962 because he had challenged the interests of the Anglo-American oil companies, the infamous "Seven Sisters," and the post-War World II Yalta division of the world.

Moro's plan was strongly supported by the Vatican. Pope Paul VI's 1967 encyclical *Populorum Progressio* had laid the basis for overcoming the division of the world into two blocs and for the development of the Third World. Moro's policy cohered with Gen. Charles de Gaulle's vision of an alliance of sovereign European states "from the Atlantic to the Urals."

Thus, the realization of Moro's national unity government would have shaken the grip of the Yalta agreement, and may have anticipated the 1989 fall of the Iron Curtain by a decade, in the context of a renewed policy of economic development and cooperation in Europe and with the developing sector.

Kissinger, the Anglo-American establishment, and their Moscow counterparts hysterically opposed this possibility. Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher boasted in her memoirs that she had done everything possible with her friends in the West and East before 1989 to maintain the Iron Curtain and the cynical carving up of the world which Churchill and Stalin had carried out with the compliance of the deathly ill Franklin Roosevelt in 1944 at Yalta. One result of this British policy is the ongoing war in the Balkans and the destabilization of Europe. Kissinger confessed his support for this British policy in a speech he delivered on May 10, 1982 at Chatham House, the headquarters of Royal Institute for International Affairs.

This is why Moro had to be stopped at all costs. On March 16, 1978, shortly before 9 a.m. in Via Fani in Rome, a team of assassins from the Red Brigades attacked the two cars which Moro and his five bodyguards were riding in, and carried out an incredibly sophisticated terrorist attack. The five policemen were killed immediately, while Moro, miraculously unwounded, was whisked away. Moro was on his way to the Chamber of Deputies, where a new Andreotti government, which had emerged from a programmatic agreement between the Christian Democracy (Moro and Andreotti's party) and the Italian Communists, the leading opposition party, was to be voted on that morning. It was the moment for which he had worked for many years.

Moro was held for 55 days in a "people's prison" and interrogated till his murder on May 9. Symbolically, his body was left in a car in Via Caetani in downtown Rome, between the headquarters of the two parties. With Moro died his "national unity" policy.

Lapses . . .

Unfortunately, the WDR film does not follow up on the international networks behind the terrorist operation, though it does identify some important elements. First, the attack was carried out with military precision, as in the cases of industrialist Schleyer in 1975 and Deutsche Bank head Herrhausen in 1989—which could not have been performed by the pumped-up sociology students who formed the Red Brigades cadres. If these students and civilians were involved, they received professional training of a level that can only be provided by some military or secret service. The training of the Red Brigades has never been clarified.

Second, all the various investigations and trials of the Moro assassination have revealed a staggering mountain of evidence and circumstances which indicates that there was no intention to track down the terrorists and free Moro. A few examples: The photos taken by a local resident a few minutes after the attack vanished (it is said that they may have revealed the presence of key eyewitnesses who could have put the investigation immediately on the right track); the terrorist safehouse on Via Gradoli in Rome, where the “head” of the Red Brigades lived, was known, but the lead was never pursued; the Red Brigades’ printing press used to produce all the communiqués during Moro’s imprisonment was previously owned and operated by the secret service (special “Rus” units) of the Defense Ministry. The Gladio networks—the special units of the “Stay Behind” plan in case of military attack, invasion from the Warsaw Pact, or takeover by the communist parties, which came to light in the late 1980s—were under the Rus. There are indications that Gladio-linked individuals may have played a negative role during the Moro kidnapping.

Immediately after the kidnapping, a “Technical-Operational Committee” was created to coordinate the investigation. The members of this committee were: Adm. Giovanni Torrisi, chief of staff of defense; Gen. Giuseppe Santovito, head of military intelligence (SISMI); Gen. Giulio Grassini, head of civilian intelligence (SISDE); and Generals Raffaele Giudice and Donato Lo Prete, who were in command of the tax police (Guardia di Finanza). Later, in 1981, all of these persons were discovered to be members of the secret Propaganda-2 freemasonic lodge of the Scottish Rite, directed by Grand Master Licio Gelli. The P-2, which was involved in vast corruption operations, came under the Grand Lodge of London, i.e., the English royal house, and was connected with Kissinger, Alexander Haig, and sections of the Pentagon and U.S. intelligence community, in what was labeled as the U.S. “secret government” during the Iran-Contra scandal.

This is the Yalta faction which opposed Moro, who was fraudulently labeled the “Italian Allende.” Gelli and his P-2 were operating along the lines of his 1975 “Plan for Democratic Rebirth,” aimed at some kind of coup against Moro’s project. It is not surprising that the committee did nothing

useful to secure Moro’s freedom.

A second “Parallel Committee” was created in the Interior Ministry to “advise” the psychologically confused Francesco Cossiga, then minister of interior and later President of Italy. A key adviser was Steve Pieczenik, an undersecretary in the U.S. State Department, head of its anti-terrorism office, and a close friend and associate of Kissinger. His main advice was that in that moment of destabilization one should demonstrate that “nobody is indispensable to the life of the state.” This line was echoed by the *Washington Post* in a March 17, 1978 editorial calling for “a very different style of government” to emerge from the crisis in Italy.

. . . and false leads

The WDR program also implied that Pope Paul VI may have abandoned Moro to his death. Quite apart from the close friendship between the two, this is not only proven false by any careful examination of events, but the innuendo suggests a possible masonic contamination of the reportage, with a clear intent to sling mud at the Catholic Church. The WDR film’s fixation on implicating only the Italian secret services in the sabotage and coverup is also misleading, because it leaves out the “international conspiracy” aspect that is the motor of the terrorist operation.

Italian journalist and secret service confidant Pecorelli, who knew too much and was later killed, put it this way: “Yalta decided the operation of Via Fani.” WDR should know better, especially given the recent revelations of the links between the Red Army Faction—Germany’s counterpart, and also coworkers, of the Red Brigades—and the Stasi, the dreaded secret services of communist East Germany.

WDR alleged that the current scandals which are destroying the Italian Christian Democracy are the result of the role the party played during the Moro kidnapping. On the contrary, it is well documented that months before Moro was seized, the U.S. State Department had begun to circulate the lie that Moro, under the code name of “Antelope Cobbler,” had received a \$1 million bribe from Lockheed to sell 18 Hercules airplanes to Italy. After the State Department’s dirty role was exposed, the Italian Constitutional Court cleared Moro from any wrongdoing in the Lockheed affair.

Thirteen days later, the Red Brigades kidnapped him. If the operation had fully succeeded then, Italy’s entire postwar political leadership would have been wiped out in 1978, not 15 years later.

While the existence of corruption in the Italian political system is indisputable, one should not be too naive in accepting all the political reasoning and maneuvering which have liquidated in less than two years the entire political leadership that emerged from World War II. Like the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in the United States, the Moro killing leaves questions that must be posed persistently all the way to the highest levels “above suspicion,” in order for a nation to regain its national sovereignty.