

italy

Demise of the Christian Democrats

July 8 (IPS) — As the sixty to ninety day deadline for world economic breakdown expires, Italy's municipalities and social services, her small industries and public and private construction are collapsing on schedule. Garroted by the credit therapy of Rockefeller tool and Bank of Italy head Guido Carli, these sectors are sweeping away an entire social layer as they fall. Virtually every venal local bureaucrat, petty speculator, Savings Bank functionary, second-string *mafioso*, and antiquarian capitalist — almost the entire clientele of the *Democrazia cristiana* (DC) — are slated for the chopping block. With their demise, the whole postwar regime of bourgeois Italy and thirty years of Christian Democratic hegemony is coming to a sudden, explosive end.

DC Formed to Stop Communists

The first thing to understand is that the DC is not really a political party at all, but a kind of gaudy American hotel for Italian carpetbaggers. Unlike the Communists and the Socialists, who were hegemonic in the anti-fascist Resistance of northern Italy, the Christian Democrats had no legitimate role in the partisan movement of 1943-45. Fearful that the highly politicized workers of north Italy might actually seize state power, the Allies created a mass Catholic party based on the sadistic grip of the Church over backward layers in the Southern Mezzogiorno region and the Northeastern Venetia region. The men who have governed Italy since 1945, the Fanfanis, Andreottis, Colombos, etc., were culled from the fascist-collaborationist Catholic Action, laundered in Switzerland, and recycled as anti-fascists to run Italy for American imperialist interests.

In exchange for their services, these good Christians were permitted to build fiefdoms based on connections with the Mafia, the Vatican, the oil interests, etc., trading votes for goodies out of the public till. Much of Fanfani and Andreotti factional strength, for example, rests on strong connections to Mafia-linked Sicilian politicians, Premier Rumor is coated with petroleum, and so forth.

Agnelli Turns Against DC

Now Gianni Agnelli, who heads the Fiat empire and recently became president of Confindustria — the manufacturers' association — has begun informing the small capitalists who proverbially can't see past their plant gates about a new Rockefeller policy for governing Italy. On a visit last week to Brescia, heartland of primitive small-scale industrialism, where the recent

fascist outrages have dealt a severe setback to the public image of the entrepreneurs, Agnelli made it clear that the days of Confindustria support for the DC exclusively were finished. Faced with the necessity of luring left parties and trade unions into participating in their own destruction, Confindustria today has discovered a convergence of views with its natural antagonists, the Socialist Party of Italy.

Under this doctrine the Socialist Party would have an increased role in the center-left government, with the DC considerably scaled down. Confindustria would support such a formula to mobilize workers in the productive sector against the unproductive fluff in the State sector, where the Christian Democracy is dominant. As part of the honeymoon with the Socialists, Fiat is now pioneering a six-year program to guarantee employment levels in exchange for breaking down the skilled industrial workforce into labor gangs, to be allocated en masse in the Mezzogiorno slave-labor projects now on the drawing boards.

Watching the whole basis of its rule suddenly crumble, the *Democrazia cristiana* has gone haywire. After the painful setbacks May 12 in the divorce referendum and June 16 in the Sardinian elections, the leaders and the *Palude* — the aptly named swamp — of the seven official *correnti* and innumerable subfactions in the DC have scattered in every direction looking for cover, trying to find some new basis for a political future.

"Historic Compromise"

With the PCI?

On the left, the leading exponent of Mezzogiorno recycling schemes, Carlo Donat-Cattin, back-talked party secretary Fanfani and got thrown off the party executive, provoking a series of resignations. Meanwhile, a convention of pro-divorce Catholics met in Rome amid applause from the Communist Party of Italy and rumors of the formation of a new left-Catholic party.

But even right-wing southerners, immersed in clientele politics, are jumping on the Rockefeller-Agnelli bandwagon. A few days ago State Holdings Minister Nino Gullotti, a Sicilian, came out in favor of a so-called historic compromise with the Communist Party at the DC youth congress!

Fanfani Scrambles

This week Amintore Fanfani has been frantically meeting with faction leaders to persuade them to reconstitute the party on the time-honored basis of division of the spoils. With no spoils left to be divided, the only

motivation for a DCer to accept this ploy now is the fear of the unknown alternative.

The same terror permeates the national leadership of the Communist Party of Italy. Devout centrist bureaucrats, they will do everything possible to keep the DC together, because without the DC they are face to face

with the question of seizure of state power. In this political vacuum the European Labor Committees' proposal of an immediate moratorium on foreign debt, and the building of international support to defend it, is reaching the politicized layers of the working class with the sole real alternative.

IPS book review:

Mussolini's Widow Remembers Papa

MUSSOLINI: An Intimate Biography

By His Widow Rachele Mussolini as told to Albert Zarca.

Morrow \$8.95.

July 8 (IPS) — “Duce, you are too kindhearted,” Hitler told Mussolini during the troubles of 1943. “You’ll never make a dictator.” Mama — Benito’s pet name for his wife Rachele — agrees: “he was opposed to hurting people. . . . His philosophy was such that he felt a more intimate bond with someone like Ghandi or Francis of Assisi...than with someone like Stalin or Hitler...” Too tender to cut off the wart on his neck his children loved to play with, a man afraid of ghosts and the evil eye,

Benito is posthumously rehabilitated and castrated by Rachele’s almost embarrassing mass of clinical evidence exposing the **bambino** behind the brawling, dueling **cazzisto**. Rachele sacrificed herself by tolerating his liaison with Claretta Petacci, but he always loved Mama best and she, unlike Petacci, survived. “The Italian is a great big well-meaning baby” — at the age of 83 Rachele views the Italy of strikes and Bolshevism as a crowd of children in need of “a stern father figure.” Basically, she declared, “Mussolini did more for his country than all his successors,” but fell through soft heartedness. Next time no more nice guys. Mama, a patron saint of Italy’s fascist MSI movement, knows best.