

Italian press links Abscam to Mafia and Red Brigades

by Linda de Hoyos

Evidence continues to mount that the Justice Department Abscam apparatus that carried out the frame-up of Sen. Harrison Williams is up to its neck in organized crime, including the international drug traffic.

As Senate hearings approached on the proposed expulsion of the New Jersey Democrat, an article published by the Italian press agency La Repubblica in Rome on Feb. 23 stated that the Justice Department's Thomas Puccio, chief Abscam prosecutor against Senator Williams, is rumored to have received in the mid-1970s "the modest sum of \$16 million in one of his numerous trips to Sicily in exchange for shutting his eyes to the trafficking of drugs between Palermo [Sicily] and New York."

The rumors are given credibility by Puccio's manifest lack of attention to the drug trade within his jurisdiction, La Repubblica pointed out. The news service, which is received by most Italian government officials and business executives, carries the report, first published in *EIR* on Feb. 16, that Puccio is a "good friend" of Michele Papa, the man who mediated the link between Billy Carter and Qaddafi, and who is known to be one of the kingpins of the Italian Mafia.

The revelations concerning Puccio may shed light on the agenda of meetings reported by one intelligence source to have taken place recently between Puccio and U.S. Ambassador to Italy Maxwell Rabb. The ambassador is known to have links to organized crime through his former position on the board of directors of the Airport Hotel Corporation, a company associated with

Meyer Lansky, which is now being bought up by Lansky's Resorts International. Rabb is also a former member of the board of the Sterling National Bank and Trust Company, currently being sued by the Italian government for abetting the unsavory Michele Sindona's looting of the now-defunct Banca Privata Italiana.

Italian investigators have found that the Red Brigades terrorists who kidnapped NATO Gen. James Dozier functions as one entity with the drug-running Italian Mafia, which funnels drug revenue to the Red Brigades. The indictment of 75 Mafia bosses in Palermo on Jan. 22 for heroin trafficking into the United States was essential to cracking the Dozier case, according to Italian authorities.

The Italian investigation has also shown that the controllers of terrorism who select its targets are not indigenous to Italy, but center in the illegal Freemasonic lodge Propaganda-2, which is linked to Alexander Haig and the Club of Rome's Aurelio Peccei, among others.

The FBI and the Red Brigades

To date, the U.S. Justice Department has stonewalled on following up any one of the leads from Italy into the controllers of the narcotics business in the United States. The revelations now flooding from Italy on the connections between international organized crime and the Abscam apparatus within the Justice Department go a long way toward explaining this passivity. That apparatus is centered in the Depart-

ment's Federal Bureau of Investigation.

According to new information from Italy, the FBI, whose jurisdiction is restricted to the United States, was active in infiltrating the Red Brigades in Italy. The revelations came in the Feb. 22 issue of the Rome daily *Paese Sera*, which reported that an Italian national, Salvatore Crisafi, says that he was jailed in the United States on rape charges through the connivance of the FBI when he refused to infiltrate the Red Brigades for the Bureau. Although the FBI has admitted that the Crisafi case concerns "a counterespionage question abroad," it has refused on "grounds of national security" to discuss any material pertaining to the case.

According to Crisafi, through the FBI he came into contact with associates of John Connally's Citizens' Alliance for Mediterranean Freedom (CAMF). Crisafi states that CAMF was then in the midst of plotting to destabilize the quondam Italian government and set up a separate Sicilian state; the Red Brigades were to have played a major role in the operation. The goal was to prevent a Christian Democratic governmental alliance with the Communist Party, an alliance favored by proponents of industrial growth in both parties, and to achieve Propaganda-2's goal of dismantling the republic.

As charged in the 1979 trial of drug financier Michele Sindona, this plot had the participation of Alexander Haig, then NATO commander, and Thomas Puccio's "good friend" Michele Papa.

The Weinberg charges

The Crisafi involvement with the FBI took place in 1974-75. This is also the period when Mel Weinberg, the sting man who appears to have run much of the entrapment operation against Senator Williams, was helping to finance the Red Brigades through London Investors, an entity that is part of the Meyer Lansky drug-money empire. Weinberg admitted his funding role in Robert Greene's biography of the Justice Department employee, *The Sting Man*.

The credibility of the Federal Witness Protection Program's "star witness" against the Senator, a 23-year veteran of the nation's highest law-making body, has already been severely damaged by evidence entered in court by his estranged wife, Marie Weinberg, who was found dead in her home on Jan. 26. Mrs. Weinberg charged that her husband had committed perjury in his testimony against Williams, and that he had bribed FBI agents. On Feb. 24 the latter charge was substantiated by affidavits from FBI agents John Good and Anthony Amoroso, who both worked on the case against Williams, stating that they had "bought" furniture and clothing, including fur coats, from Weinberg, and accepted money from him. Prosecutor Puccio termed their statements and Mrs. Weinberg's charges as beside the

point.

On Feb. 24, those charges were also dismissed as "irrelevant" in Washington, D.C. by the Justice Department, in the case of Rep. Richard Kelly of Florida, another U.S. congressman victimized by Abscam. Kelly had demanded that Federal Court Judge Richard Bryant reopen his case based on Mrs. Weinberg's evidence of gross Justice Department misconduct in the Abscam operation.

La Repubblica on Thomas Puccio and heroin trade

The following news wire was released on Feb. 23 by the Rome-based La Repubblica press agency. La Repubblica press agency is an influential Italian wire service that circulates daily to all government circles in Italy, including all parliamentarians, cabinet officials and the Vatican. The wire had the headline: The prosecution witness financed the Red Brigades; A Watergate case in the Washington Senate—does Sicilian Mafia control sections of American justice system?

In Uniondale, in the State of New York, Federal Judge George C. Pratt sentenced Senator Harrison Williams, New Jersey Democrat, to three years in jail and a \$50,000 fine for having had the "intention" of taking a bribe from a false sheik. This is a complex story for an Italian audience, one which has been totally ignored here, although in the United States, it has for months filled the pages of the major press. The issue is a new wave of scandals termed "Abscam" (Arab scam), except that the Arabs are not at all involved.

Toward the end of the 1970s some agents of the FBI, the American federal police, disguised themselves as Arab sheiks and approached various American Congressmen and Senators to offer them money in exchange for favors. The conversations between the presumed sheiks and the designated victim were accurately guided and taped. After a while, particularly from the beginning of the electoral campaign of January 1980, the FBI started making public all its investigations; a chief prosecutor, Thomas Puccio, was utilizing the proofs that had been artificially collected by the FBI in order to launch denunciations to which the press gave ample coverage in a gigantic lynching campaign.

The case of Senator Williams has this peculiarity: Williams never accepted monies from the sheik-agents. After his indictment, Williams denounced Thomas Puccio and witness Mel Weinberg, demanding \$20 million in damages. In coming days there will be a vote in the Senate to decide whether or not to expel Senator Williams. If the Senate were to vote for the expulsion of Williams, accepting the ruling of Judge Pratt which is

not based on factual proofs, this would signify the end of the American legal system and would give the green light to a series of "Watergates" in the Abscam mode which, within a short time, would overturn the American political system and succeed where Hinkley had failed with his method of violence: it would cut the President in half, to make room for the return of Kissinger and the Trilateral Commission to the summit of American power.

But let us turn to the identities of the individuals involved, such as Thomas Puccio. He is the prosecutor responsible for the Eastern District of the State of New York where Kennedy Airport is located, through which passes the largest portion of drugs arriving from Palermo. . . . Over the years, innumerable drug smugglers coming from Sicily have passed unarrested [through this airport]. It was in the course of following this line of investigation that Boris Giuliano and Judge Costa were killed. The Sicilian traffickers evidently enjoy high-level protection at the New York airport. Is it possible that the Italo-American Puccio knew nothing of this? Furthermore, Puccio was himself at various times on the verge of being investigated by the Drug Enforcement Agency, the American anti-drug police, but was always able to avoid it.

The DeFeo Report of the U.S. Justice Department which appeared in 1975 points to Puccio as an individual linked to drug traffickers. But Puccio has always been cleared of these accusations—the last time by Michael Shaheen, an official of the Justice Department who gained notoriety in early 1981 when he cleared Billy Carter of the accusation of having taken hundreds of thousands of dollars from [Libyan President Muammar] Qaddafi in exchange for illegal procurement of weapons. As will be recalled, the mediation between Carter and Qaddafi was carried out by the attorney, Michele Papa, head of the Sicilian-Libyan Friendship Society, accused of being part of a Sicilian independence movement as well as of the Mafia.

But this is not the only connection between Puccio and Mafia circles. If one were to ask Michele Papa about Puccio, he would answer as if Puccio were his old friend. In the United States, there are persistent rumors that Puccio in the mid-1970s received the modest sum of \$16 million in one of his numerous trips to Sicily in exchange for shutting his eyes to the trafficking of drugs between Palermo and New York. Then there is the case of Weinberg, the key witness on whose testimony the case against Williams is based. Weinberg's wife has revealed on the ABC television network that her husband is an agent paid by the FBI to testify to whatever the FBI wants. Two days later, she was found dead in her home and the documents proving her husband's guilt had disappeared. The FBI ruled that it was a case of suicide.

There is a book in the United States entitled *The Sting Man*, written by Robert W. Greene, which deals with a

romanticized version of the life of Weinberg. Among other things it recounts that Weinberg financed the Red Brigades . . . shortly before the kidnapping of [former Italian Prime Minister] Aldo Moro. If some light were thrown on the Puccio and Weinberg case against Williams, perhaps not only would a threat to American institutions be stopped, but also some light might be thrown on the Sicilian-American drug Mafia and the connections of this with Italian terrorism.

Paese Sera on the FBI and Italian terrorists

The following was printed in the Rome daily newspaper, Paese Sera, Feb. 22, 1982, under the headline: The shadow of the CIA over the case of an Italian in an American prison. Salvatore Crisafi maintains he is a victim of a plot. A woman proposed to him to infiltrate the Red Brigades, by John Cappelli.

On the 21st of April, after spending nearly seven years in jail and many being the subject of contradictory documents involving the FBI and the Red brigades, Salvatore Crisafi will be released from prison. . . .

Accused in Washington of "carnal violence," Crisafi still maintains that the case was the result of a contrived plot against him. He had refused repeated requests on the part of [a mysterious American, Gloria Donovan] to infiltrate the Red Brigades, but through her had come to know of operations involving the kidnapping of Gianni Agnelli and Angelo Rizzoli. So it was an easy matter to orchestrate his love story with the two girls in the American capital, who then screamed of rape—he recounts—and he was handed a very heavy sentence to take him out of circulation for several years.

Salvatore Crisafi—who in Italy has a wife and children—had wanted to document, with facts, his version of the story. The presentation of his evidence, however, was not only not accepted, and ruled as extraneous by the court, it also turned out to be impractical because the FBI refused—citing reasons of state—to bring forward anything from their archives on the case.

On April 16, 1980, court case number 79-2909, the document number 105-310905, respecting Crisafi, was taken away from Crisafi because "its non-authorized release could harm national security." Although the four pages of documentation—which we have seen—were withdrawn in their totality, the accompanying letter to the prosecutor signed by special agent Gary Stoops confirms that the secret material in the dossier "deals in a specific manner with the objective of a counterespionage operation abroad; in effect, a specific spying operation. Given the specific details of the information, a detailed description could lead to the discovery of the spy

operation as such.” This is what the FBI had to say. Crisafi himself refuses to go beyond indicating the role for which Gloria Donovan wanted to recruit him and the never-explained trips to Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

Crisafi’s mental stability was questioned by the prison authorities because of his difficulties with the other prisoners, which the authorities attributed to psychological problems. “Nonsense,” Crisafi replies, putting forward a detailed documentation of the abuses which he has suffered . . . citing incidents indicating the desire to have him assassinated.

On August 7, 1981, the resident psychiatrist of Lewisburg penitentiary in Pennsylvania formally impeded Crisafi’s transfer to the prison hospital of Springfield, Missouri—where Sindona is being held—certifying him sound of mind.

. . . [One of the women of whose rape he was accused was Miss Nancy Osborne]. In 1979, she was a political adviser (at the time of the presumed crime) to Senator Walter Huddlestone, one of the most noted pro-CIA legislators in the Senate. The other girl involved in the case, Cynthia Kean, worked in the press office of Exxon. In order to document his contacts with Gloria Donovan, the alleged recruiter of soldiers of fortune and spies, Crisafi submitted the names of individuals which they had jointly met at the American Legion Club in Paris, or who knew her for her frequent trips to Rome. Among these individuals was the Rome lawyer Paolo Pisano (“To whom I was supposed to turn when I had any problems with the law in Italy”, says Crisafi). Others were Anthony Marinelli of Washington, “Friend of John Connally and actively involved in the Italian political situation at that time (1974-1975), and David Mazarrella and James Long of the *Daily American*.

It should be recalled that John Connally, in the period 1974-1976, was the promoter of the organization “Citizens’ Alliance for Mediterranean Freedom” with offices in Washington, New York and Rome, and that he had among his objectives the defeat of the Communists in Italy as well as a future secession of Sicily—a separatist project that was strangely revived by Sindona in 1979.

Crisafi may be involved in a spy network at a low level . . . but a depth examination of his case—which earned him an extremely harsh sentence of 21 years—could help in unraveling this as well as other knots.

Senator Williams: ‘let us pursue the real criminals’

Harrison Williams, Democratic Senator from New Jersey, asked Warren J. Hamerman, Chairman of the National Democratic Policy Committee, to read for him a statement

at the National Democratic Policy Committee’s event on Feb. 19 in Washington, D.C. Excerpts follow:

I am standing and will always stand side by side with Lyndon LaRouche in our important and noble fight to restore the bedrock principles of constitutional justice to our nation.

I have recently thought about the great Italian poet Dante who knew, after he was politically targeted and framed in his native Florence long ago, that he would one day receive full exoneration and respect for his courage in continuing to fight against evil and wrongdoing in government. I am encouraged from day to day with the same certain knowledge of eventual vindication. . .

I have drawn courage from the countless citizens in every part of this land—the ordinary American citizens whom I have dedicated 23 years in the United States Senate to serving—for their encouraging response to our cause. I have been especially excited by the work of our allies in Western Europe who have brought this case to the forefront of concern of European citizens and governments. . . .

We must restore to our judicial system the goal of preventing crime, not manufacturing crime.

At the very beginning of the Abscam affair two years ago. . . as I looked out of my house and saw a barricade of media—who received leaks from the Department of Justice before I myself was accused of any crime—I knew then that the first principle of American justice was being turned on its head. That first principle of justice is that a man is innocent until proven guilty. . . .

Our nation is in a great crisis. We are threatened by the twin evils of economic depression and police-state methods being consolidated in government. . . . It has always amazed me that those who are doing the most damage in drug trafficking, and making the most money, those major people at the top of the pinnacle who are the importers and the basic distributors of drugs, seem to be getting away scot-free. . . .

The economic front of our nation demands the most active concern. I believe that the entire American people should subscribe, as I do, to the brilliant, full economic growth program which Lyn LaRouche has dedicated his life to bringing about, even though there are certain details of the plan on which I may differ.

In addition to my fight against Abscam, I will be devoting my Senate energies to undoing the conditions of economic collapse which the high interest rates of Paul Volcker have triggered. Towards this end, I wish to take the opportunity this evening to announce that I will be joining the initiative of my colleague Sen. John Melcher in sponsoring a Senate resolution mandating the lowering of interest rates and the restoration of realistic and effective credit for economic growth. . . .