

Eyewitness report: how the Sicilian separatists do NATO's bidding

by a Special Correspondent

The following is an eyewitness report by an EIR special correspondent who attended a series of meetings called ostensibly to build for the April 4 anti-NATO demonstration in Comiso, Sicily.

From the center of Palermo, Sicily, the Norman Palace dominates the city from its hilltop position surrounded by little gardens. Today it is the seat of the Sicilian regional *parliamente*. This is not a regional council such as those that exist throughout mainland Italy; Sicily is a region with a special statute, and the power of its parliament is much broader than that of Italy's other 17 regional administrations.

On the main facade of the palace there is a stone plaque which recalls that Frederick II (Hohenstaufen) of Swabia lived there in the 13th century, and that he was the first to gather to his court the men of letters, those poets who wrote in the vernacular tongue to give the population a universally comprehensible language, capable of communicating ideas. The cathedral of Palermo, constructed in the 12th century, reproduces the themes of the great French cathedrals of the epoch; and one is surprised to reflect that it is true that the land of the Mafia was the first cradle of the Italian Renaissance.

There are people today who would like to change history. They are not content with the special autonomous status which Sicily enjoys under the Italian constitution, and they would like to make it no longer a region of Italy but an "island-nation" like Malta. If we identify precisely who they are, what is the end they seek, and if one were to conduct an open political campaign to drive them to the fringes of society, then the woes of Sicily and perhaps many of those of present-day Italy would be resolved.

Behind the Mafia myth

There is a devilish alliance which has tormented Sicily since the postwar period: the alliance between the Mafia and the NATO apparatus. Previously the alliance existed between the Mafia and the Mussolini regime. The problem lies in the fact that the Mafia is seen by

many as a government structure. The profound cowardice in dealing with the Mafia, promoted by presumed radicals like the writer Leonardo Sciascia, has allowed it to continue to be able to use Sicily as a "special" region, while nurturing secret projects for detaching the island once and for all from the national government in order to carry out the filthy traffic in drugs and arms totally undisturbed.

At the end of World War II the Anglo-American secret services used Mafiosi to make contacts in Sicily in preparation for the allied landing. Well known are the cases of the alliances between American agents Vanni Buscemi Montana (today a fervent admirer of the would-be Duce II, Socialist Party leader Bettino Craxi), Max Corvo, and Lucky Luciano; or the contacts between British agents and characters like Antonio Canepa, the Communist Sicilian-independence leader whose economic program was precisely the self-management corporativism that had been Mussolini's original policy and was shared by British intelligence's Action Party. Since it would be absurd to suppose that without the presumed "aid" of the Mafia the war could not have been won by the Allies, one can only assume that some groups of oligarchical orientation such as that of Winston Churchill or Charles Poletti started to work with the Mafia in order to have a capability at hand to use as a tool to control or destabilize adverse national governments.

NATO's objectives

Last Feb. 27 at the City Council Hall of Catania a speech was given by Admiral William J. Crowe, Jr., commander-in-chief of the Allied Forces of Southern Europe. In his speech—which was held the very day that news of the atomic submarine surprised in Italian territorial waters was put out on the news wires—Crowe announced for the first time officially that the peril to NATO came not only from the East but also from the South. The main argument was that the U.S.S.R. is threatening to cut off the Middle East petroleum routes.

But this is not the main significance of the speech.

Crowe in fact touched on two topics which reveal a crucial aspect of NATO strategy: 1) If for any reason the United States should lose "faith . . . in the resolution and decision" of the European allies, it would tend to withdraw into an "isolationist" attitude, "and therefore it is important that the Europeans recognize that any change whatsoever in the American people's perceptions—right or wrong—can rapidly bring down an already-decided government policy"; and 2) Crowe complained that the populations of the southeast rim of NATO are expanding rapidly and he concluded: "Even without foreign intervention, this demographic factor constitutes in itself a sufficient element to create political instability for the rest of the century."

What does this mean? It means that NATO has announced that to enact the "southern flank" strategy means, on the one hand, imposing the dictates of the Carter administration *Global 2000* project of reducing world population, and, on the other hand, overthrowing those governments that oppose such a strategy.

The Mafia has been mobilized today to realize these objectives. Within this general strategic goal, the Mafia has its own particular ends. But they are not inconsistent with the general ends of the *Global 2000* gameplan: The traffic in dope and weapons is precisely among those things that most enhance what is euphemistically called "population control." In Sicily it is very visible that the most diverse forces are converging on these objectives: from the fascist networks coddled in Franco's Spain, which represent the highest-level structure, to the independent-Sicily movements of every political color, to the useful idiot Colonel Qaddafi of Libya and his even more useful henchmen on the island.

The independence movement

The Fifth Congress of the Siculan Independence Movement, named for the Latin term for the largest indigenous Sicilian ethnic group, the Siculi, was announced with huge posters. In a small hotel room in Ragusa in southeastern Sicily about 30 persons gathered who, with the typical mysticism of those ready to burst out into terrorist acts at the drop of a hat, protest that "regimes change but the police are always the same," and then run down the list of the martyrs from the postwar period to the present of the *Esercito Volontario Indipendentista Siculo* (EVIS—the Voluntary Sicilian Independence Army). Pippo Scianò, president of the movement, explains that it is time to unite with the ecologists to defend the Siculan soil and bring the colonization of the "continent" (the Sicilian term of reference to the Italian mainland) to an end. The program is to make Sicily an island nation like Malta, and convert it into a free zone. It appears that Scianò is close to the Palestine Liberation Organization. Another speaker proposes that bilingualism be introduced even



though it is not with "cultural" movements that Sicily will be liberated. The few participants applaud loudly and shout when the speeches are finished: "Long Live free and independent Sicily." This reporter felt a bit uneasy, thinking that these are old militants from the EVIS, which counted 8,000 under arms whose weapons have never been found.

Where might Mr. Scianò have gotten his ideas from? Just a few weeks earlier at Nancy, in France, there was a meeting of the Pan-European Union of Otto von Hapsburg, pretender to the throne of the defunct Austro-Hungarian Empire, with exponents of Siculan independence and others from Corsica, the Valle d'Aosta (a French-speaking semi-autonomous region in northern Italy), and the South Tyrol (another Italian region with

a non-Italian German-speaking ethnic minority) participating. Contacts and programs of reciprocal visits to the respective demonstrations planned in each region for the next period were established at that Nancy meeting. Valdostan and Tyrolean representatives participated in the Ragusa meeting, along with representatives of Sicilian organizations in the United States.

But what gave substance to this flag-waving was the project of making the "Sicilian Independent Nation" into a free zone. One of the leaders of the movement, who carries himself very proudly because he is considered a man of the "Americanni," unlike the other separatists who are merely financed by Qaddafi, explained it to this correspondent. If Sicily is a free zone, it will become the hinge of trade between Africa, Asia, Europe, and the United States, a world commercial center more important than Hong Kong. "Raw materials could be worked up here into finished products and re-exported at a very low price. Naturally a large part of this trade would consist of drugs, but we only are concerned that it not be consumed here. If anyone is so stupid as to use it elsewhere, it is no problem for us to sell it." He recalled with a flash of rage in his eyes that the petroleum swindle of 1975 was organized in Sicily, and claimed that Sicily should have realized the proceeds of the black market in oil.

These projects for "independence" might seem impotent dreams, but is it not perhaps also true that Michele Sindona [the Italian banker known in the United States for massing fraud in the collapse of Franklin National Bank] came to Sicily in 1979 with the idea of preparing a "secession" from the Italian government?

Qaddafi finances and supports the ecology movement and peace movement precisely in order to pursue this end. "Leave Qaddafi alone," a businessman from Catania hints to one meeting. "What he is doing [for the demonstration in Comiso] is useful for attracting the attention of NATO to Sicily." Then he patiently explains that what happens in the political world means nothing, because all the politicians and journalists are paid either by Qaddafi or by Sicilian "industrialists." "It's that way in other places too, only here in Sicily it's really everyone, everyone."

Who are these "industrialists"? They are people who "want to make a lot of money with short-term investments," and therefore they finance the drugs and arms trade, and are perfectly open to the idea of a Hong Kong in the Mediterranean. Anyway, they argue, if they don't do it in Sicily, someone else will reap the benefits, as occurs now with most of the drug traffic passing through Albania. The problem is that up to now, because of the Italian national government, the Sicilian "industrialists" have not been able to ally openly with Qaddafi and use his money. If they could

do it, the profits, already calculable in billions, would increase even more.

One small detail: The businessman who is saying all these things comes from the ranks of the right-wing Falangists of Spain and he claims to be, and probably is, the friend of persons at the highest ranks of NATO. That is, he does not belong to the Mafia per se, but to that structure that uses the Mafia and its greed to enact strategy by means of "business." His role is the same as that of Licio Gelli, the grand master of the Propaganda-2 Freemasonic lodge which was exposed ten months ago in a coup plot against the Italian government.

The Falangist's admiration for Qaddafi is matched only by that expressed by an important local Communist, organizer of the Comiso demonstration to protest the emplacement of NATO nuclear missiles in Sicily. He says, like everyone in Sicily, that he *knows perfectly well that Sicily is already full of nuclear missiles*, and that the Comiso rally will change nothing from this standpoint, whether or not the installation is made. The unacceptable detail about Comiso is that its missiles will be aimed against Qaddafi's Libya.

The ecologists themselves maintain that the construction of the Comiso base, given the narrowness and indefensibility of the location, is in reality extremely improbable. Everything that is going on around Comiso, from the construction of the site to the movements against it, is a scenario around which rotate two orders of converging interests, however much differentiated they may be in the multicolored disguises of Mafia and ecology movements. The first is that strategic interest of NATO, which, far from being interested in problems of defense, looks to the overthrow of governments important for international political stability like that of the current Italian Prime Minister Spadolini. At the second level, the Mafia is mobilized for the financial advantages of Sicilian independence to traffic in arms and drugs.

In Sicily today billions of lira are circulating from this illicit traffic. But all you have to do is to go into the alleyways of Palermo to find yourself in the blackest wretchedness. The independence advocates demagogically ascribe this poverty to the policies of the "continental government." In reality, it is the fruit of the fact that up to now, the Italian government has not done enough to defend the Sicilians from the Mafia's oppression. The reason for this is the high-placed protectors of the Mafia: The P-2 apparatus of the "friends of Haig" in NATO. It is they, in many cases the relics of the fascist regime selectively salvaged by Charles Poletti and the Dulles brothers, who today use Qaddafi as an arm for crushing republican governments.

Until they are eliminated, the commemorative plaque of Frederick II on the Norman Palace will remain only the pathetic testimony of Sicily's glorious past, in the midst of a sea of misery.