

An anti-narcotics effort spoils the Rolling Stones European party

by Muriel Mirak from Wiesbaden

In the impresarios' intentions, it was supposed to be the biggest success in the history of the rock group, a triumphant return to the musical scene welcomed by oceanic crowds and rivers of money. The hegemony of the Rolling Stones was supposed to be sanctioned by millions of youth who, filling the stadiums of the great cities of Europe, from Paris to Munich, from Madrid to Florence, were supposed to enroll in the armies of drug addicts.

It did not go quite the way Billy Graham, the group's impresario, had planned; indeed, the audiences were much smaller than expected, and in Turin and in some cases in the Federal Republic of Germany, downright "disappointing" according to the organizers themselves, who came close to seeing the entire Italian leg of the tour canceled. For the first time in Europe the group's right to exhibit itself was contested, and in Florence that right was denied. Polemical positions were taken at the highest levels of the Church, and the dope culture was publicly condemned.

It all began last spring when, as soon as the summer tour of the Rolling Stones was announced, the Anti-Drug Coalition decided to make an example of it. In May, the ADC mobilized its tens of thousands of members in Europe (the organization exists in Denmark, Sweden, France, Italy, and West Germany) to inform the civic authorities, political and religious forces, and the press of the true implications of the rock group's initiative. It was not a question, said the Coalition, of a cultural event, as the promoters maintained, but of a huge publicity operation by the international narcotics cartel, Dope, Inc., aimed at recruiting thousands of young people to the drug scene and the Satanic cult of the Rolling Stones. In economic terms, it was a question of unloading that record crop of 600 tons of opium harvested in the Southeast Asian "Golden Triangle," which was perhaps behind the precipitous drop in the prices of heroin on the French markets. The Stones tour would have served this purpose.

Already the first concerts in Germany signaled that all was not going well. In Hanover, where some newspapers published interviews with Mick Jagger trying to minimize the role of drugs in the tour, even going to the point of claiming that he no longer uses drugs himself, others published the press releases of the ADC. The battle heated up right after this in Munich, when on June 10 the spokesman for the Archbishop, the prelate Curt M. Gewien, attacked the group as an "imported pigsty."

The next stop was Frankfurt at the end of the month, and the political climate was scalding. Gabriele Liebig, a candidate on the European Labor Party (EAP) ticket in the September regional elections, had put out a news bulletin picking up the accusations of the ADC, where she urged the local authorities of the state's capital city to follow the example of Florence, which in the meantime had canceled the Stones concert. The biggest German daily, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, had published Liebig's position, but the concert went ahead anyway. The next day scandal broke out. *Bildzeitung*, with a daily circulation of 3 million copies sold, came out with thick headlines that screamed: "At the Stones' Concert: Drugs Like Never Before."

It was no exaggeration. As even the *Frankfurter Rundschau* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* also reported, not only were coolers and tin cans filled with alcohol all over the concert, stuck in various parts of the "Festhalle," but pills, LSD, hashish, and marijuana circulated like peanuts. Ambulances came and went with sirens blaring in competition with the deafening sound of the performers. The hospitals have refused to give out figures on emergency cases, but informed sources report a hundred or so cases of overdoses, and a police press release, reported in the press, discussed the complete freedom of circulation of pushers while warning parents not to send their children to the repeat concert.

But meanwhile another factor was added, which heightened the nervousness of the organizers of the tour: From Florence the news arrived that the city council of the Tuscan capital, after lengthy debates, had voted 28 to 25 to cancel the concerts, scheduled for July 23 and 25.

The day before the council meeting Maria Cristina Fiocchi, president of the Anti-Drug Coalition in Italy, had given a press conference at the Hotel Croce di Malta in Florence. Before a crowd of journalists of the principal dailies and the RAI-TV, Italy's national radio-television network, Fiocchi unveiled the links between the dope cartel, the Rolling Stones and the cultist networks which gave birth to Hitler and now want to relaunch the Nazi movement. "Both Mick Jagger and Keith Richards," said Fiocchi, naming the two most celebrated members of the Rolling Stones, "are members of the Isis-Urania Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, founded by Bulwer-Lytton, the head of the British Secret Intelligence Services in the past century." After explaining the entire background of the tour, Fiocchi concluded: "We want to

stop this concert from taking place. We hope that other cities in Europe will have the courage to say no to the drug mafia. Renaissance Florence was admired by the whole world as the expression of economic, scientific and artistic development. Florence today must play this same role. And the refusal to hold the Rolling Stones concert could be the beginning."

One day later, as all the newspapers were reporting on the press conference, the city council got together for debate that lasted six hours and became frequently "incandescent," as *La Stampa* later put it. At the end the verdict was: The Rolling Stones are not welcome in Florence. The motive? The music of the Rolling Stones is based on the drug culture. The magazine *Gente* gave major play to the role played by the ADC in an interview with Giuliana Sammartino, the editor-in-chief of the Coalition's *Guerra alla Droga* (War on Drugs). According to *Gente*, "It was the ADC that made the Florentine politicians sensitive to the equation, 'Rolling Stone Equals Drugs.'"

Church blasts 'the Stones'

On June 10th the Curia of Munich came out strongly against the Rolling Stones concerts, stating among other things, apropos of Jagger's habit of sticking a hose between his legs and "urinating" on the audience: "If such filth occurred here in Munich, we would have to recall that the Bavarian Culture Minister once said that culture already existed when wild boars were scratching themselves on the trees. If it weren't an insult to the poor beasts, today we would have to comment: Here in Bavaria we have no need to import such a pigsty."

The voice of the Archbishop of Naples, Cardinal Ursi, was also raised against the Rolling Stones concert which took place July 17. During the homily delivered at the funeral of policeman Francesco Prata, killed by an addict, Cardinal Ursi expressed his concern about the "musical performance which is being passed off as art but which is the carrier of principles of violence and drugs."

"The problem of drug addiction is grave," the prelate continued, "throughout the world and also in Naples and, just for this reason, I feel I must express the full bitterness of the Neapolitan Church in seeing this city forced to welcome a performance which carries with it a true culture of violence and the complete lack of moral values."

The Anti-Drug Coalition had asked the cancellation of the Naples concert and provided documentation on the Rolling Stones to the Curia of Naples. Despite the Archbishop's protests to Mayor Valenzi, the concert went ahead.

The ADC poisoned the well in Turin by intervening on June 19 at a press conference called by Billy Graham and David Zard, the manager of the Italian tour. ADC vice-president Giuseppe Matteucci in front of the entire press corps accused the organizers of the concert of favoring the plans of Dope, Inc. The next day the major Genoa paper, *Secolo XIX*, carried Matteucci's charge under the headline, "[Fiat president] Agnelli lays off workers with one hand and sponsors rock with the other."

And right on cue, even though the attendance turned out to be much smaller than what had been projected, prompting talk of almost a failure, the Anti-Drug Coalition's warnings were confirmed at the Turin concert: 200 medical emergency cases of collapse and hysteria, at the rate of 50 an hour, and ambulances that shuttled to the Molinette and Mauriziano hospitals for the victims of dope, two overdoses and ten "circulatory collapses due to consumption of hard drugs," according to *Il Giornale*. According to Dr. Cardellini, interviewed by *La Repubblica*, another daily paper, "The stadium was full of drugs, but they were all well organized, they knew what to do." That is, each one had his own dose with him. One girl, stuffed with heroin, sat down on a broken bottle, but only realized it when her skirt became red with the blood. Not by accident did *La Repubblica* speak of "an almost insane holocaust." With the presence of Fiat industrialist Umberto Agnelli sporting a Mohawk haircut and Socialist Minister DeMichelis accompanied by his own "groupies," the Turin spectacle documented what kind of political collusion had made such a holocaust possible.

As we write, the battle for Naples is going on. The vice-mayor Giulio Di Donato is still promoting what he calls "modern cultural event," and is busy readying the city to host not only thousands of youth from Italy and Europe, but even several ships which are announced to be arriving from Libya and Tunisia, with not only human cargo on board but also, it should be suspected, certain kinds of merchandise. Gianni Pinto, the Communist Cultural Commissioner of the city, is cynically exploiting the sense of inferiority that can strike a citizenry forced to live in poverty, and speaks with quasi-D'Annunzian accents of a "breakthrough from the traditional shutout of Naples and the Italian Mezzogiorno from the international itineraries of culture and the performing arts."

The only voice of reason, other than that of the Anti-Drug Coalition, and of the Christian Democratic parliamentarian Cirino Pomicino who filed a parliamentary interrogatory on the Rolling Stones, is that of Cardinal Ursi, who, speaking at the funeral of the police officer Francesco Prata who had been killed by a drug addict, had words of contempt for the civic authorities which forced Naples "to host an event which carries with it the very culture of violence and the complete lack of moral values." Perhaps as a result of these stands being taken, the city's district attorney expressed his grave worries to the municipal government about the presumed circulation, inside and outside the stadium, of drugs.