

## Report from Italy by Sandro Bellati

### The Farnesina, Mata Hari, and the KGB

*Italian diplomats in Stockholm are accused of working for the KGB; Andreotti is accused of complicit silence.*

**K**GB spies operate undisturbed in Stockholm thanks to the protection assured by Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme. Although he continues to proclaim himself neutral, Palme has offered so many proofs of collaboration with the Soviet Union that many accuse him of belonging to the Russians. According to the French newspaper *VSD*, Norwegian spy Arne Treholt, currently in jail, revealed that Palme works as a ranking Russian agent. The same charges, slightly sugarcoated, were reported by the most important daily in Stockholm, *Aftonbladet*.

The Swedish European Labor Party has started a campaign to stop Palme's reelection in fall 1985, and won the support of leaders of the minority of Palme's Social Democratic Party.

In recent days another scandal blew up, which, besides involving Palme and Swedish authorities, throws a shadow of doubt over the activities of the Italian foreign ministry at Palazzo Farnesina, run by the "ductile" Giulio Andreotti.

A book came out in Sweden with the title, *The Soviet Threat Against Scandinavia*, written by the Yugoslav Dragan Jovius. The book reports that during the summer of 1980 the military attaché of the Italian embassy in Stockholm, Lorenzo Sferra, passed NATO secrets to the Soviet military attaché, Konovalov. Pretty serious charges. But when he was questioned by Italian journalists, Lorenzo Sferra, today director of the famous Morosini Naval College in Venice, denied

everything.

Sferra also denies that he had an affair with a KGB spy, an Italian lady who worked as a Russian translator at the Italian Cultural Institute in Stockholm. "It's out of the blue, I don't have the faintest idea about this story," Sferra said. "I don't know Konovalov, nor this Dragan Jovius, and much less this mysterious Mata Hari."

But a few questions would be enough to refresh Sferra's memory, provided Italian authorities were interested in asking them. For example, whether it is true that Sferra ever knew Nadia Salvetti, that he had an affair with her and bought her an elegant apartment on Odengatan 13 in Stockholm.

Nadia Salvetti, who had married a certain Ceccon but divorced him in 1981, is an up-and-coming 25-year-old woman of Italian origin. Her father frequented the party school in Moscow during the postwar period, and subsequently directed the communist-party cell in Nacka, a small town near Stockholm. Salvetti herself allegedly put the Italian functionary she seduced in contact with Russian spies, who allegedly received important information on NATO weaponry from him.

Nadia Salvetti, who seems to have opened shop in New York as well, must not be any saint if it is true that Italian police had to stop her and search her about four years ago at Milan's Linate airport while she was en route from Stockholm to the Italian port city of La Spezia, to meet—no kidding—boat captain *Lorenzo Sferra*.

But the scandal detonated by Jovius's book no longer involves just the single isolated case of a corrupted functionary, aside from how out of place Sferra's presence in the administration of Morosini college seems now. It touches on all the activities relating to Italy's last few years of diplomatic presence in Stockholm.

For example, it would be useful to ask Remo Rapetti, the vice-director of the Italian Cultural Institute in Stockholm, what his relations with Nadia Salvetti were exactly. It should also be asked of Stefano Rastrelli, who at the time of the cited events was first counsellor of the embassy in Stockholm (now in the Political Affairs Department at the Farnesina) how it was that his daughter's Russian teacher was the Soviet secretary of the Sweden-U.S.S.R. Friendship Society and a noted KGB spy. And it might also be asked why the Italian Culture Institute was headed for a long time by a certain Signora Pallavicini, whose real name is Ranzini, and if it is appropriate for the cultural attaché of the embassy, Mario Nati, to represent the country since he is a notorious habitué of homosexual dives and therefore quite blackmailable.

In sum, the picture is a bit distressing: In the shadow of the protection of pro-Soviet Palme, the men of the Farnesina and the defense ministry have found a way of getting embroiled in a "dialogue" with the Russians that smells like espionage and treason. One wonders if the Italian ambassador in Stockholm, Antonio Ciarrapico (could he be a relative of the Andreottian financier Giuseppe Ciarrapico?) will want to open up a serious inquiry into this scandal or not.

Or rather, the question could be posed to Giulio Andreotti—who might actually think espionage is all right when it comes to "dialoguing" with the Soviets?