

Report from Italy by Paolo Serri

Potential historic blow to the mafia

Foreign Minister Andreotti's name has come up in the assassination of anti-mafia "super-prefect" General Dalla Chiesa.

The Palermo, Sicily magistracy has launched an unprecedented operation against the mafia, exploiting the confession of Tommaso Buscetta, "boss of the two worlds," who in the last three decades had built a crime empire in Italy and Ibero-America. In the night between Sept. 28 and 29, several Palermo judges, headed by Giovanni Falcone, issued 366 arrest warrants; also, 28 people were reported arrested in the United States, and more are expected.

At the same time, the son of mafia-murdered Gen. Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa is accusing current Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti of involvement in the assassination of his father on Sept. 3, 1982.

These two developments signal an opportunity to finally bring to light and destroy the power of the drug mafia internationally—if sufficient political will and courage are found, primarily in the U.S.A. and Italy.

Tommaso Buscetta, known as "Don Masino," was arrested in May 1983 in Brazil. He was extradited to Italy on July 14 after having attempted suicide in his São Paulo prison—a psychological breakdown corresponding to the collapse of his crime empire. Just a few days before, interrogated in the Brazilian prison by Judge Giovanni Falcone, the leading anti-mafia fighter in Italy, and his colleague Vincenzo Geraci, Buscetta told the two stunned judges: "I am not your enemy." Back in Italy, the two judges listened to Buscetta's story for two full months, reconstructing the mafia history of crime, organizational struc-

ture, and political connections for the last two decades.

For Buscetta, cooperation with the authorities was the only way left to carry out a vendetta against his mafia competitors who had destroyed him and his associates.

The first signs of mafia internal warfare started around 1977, and much blood was shed in 1980-81. At stake was the control of the heroin market which, after the dismantling of the "French Connection" around 1972, centered once again in Sicily. Furthermore, cocaine, predominantly from Ibero-America, was becoming as significant as heroin in the overall "Dope, Inc." annual turnover.

During this internal warfare a new power group appeared—the "winning mafia"—along the Palermo-Caltanissetta axis, with the inclusion for the first time of *camorra* (Naples mafia) bosses in the Sicilian mafia leadership. In his short stay in Sicily, General Dalla Chiesa had singled out, among other things, this new connection.

Buscetta belonged to the "losing Mafia." In the internecine warfare of 1980-81, he lost seven close relatives, including two sons and a brother, murdered by rivals.

What did Buscetta say? So far, there are only vague leaks in the press, as the 10 judges involved in the interrogation keep a tight-lipped silence. Besides a flow chart on the Cosa Nostra in Sicily, the U.S.A., and Latin America, Buscetta reconstructed at least in part the long series of murders in Sicily since September 1970.

In an interview to the daily *La Repubblica*, Judge Vincenzo Geraci stated: "I cannot go into details because of judicial secrecy, but Buscetta's statements not only confirmed certain previous beliefs of ours, but opened new horizons. . . . He also gave us some keys to enter the famous 'third level'"

The "third level" in mafia jargon means the higher and most secretive levels, belonging to the "legal" crowd of politicians and bankers. Among the names mentioned by Buscetta was the former Christian Democratic mayor of Palermo, Vito Ciancimino—an Andreotti man.

Simultaneously with the 366 arrests, a book entitled *Meurtre imparfait* came out in France, by Nando Dalla Chiesa, son of the murdered *carabinieri* general, provoking another bombshell scandal by implicating Foreign Minister Andreotti in his father's death.

Nando Dalla Chiesa quotes his father: "Yesterday I saw Andreotti, he also asked me to leave for Sicily [to take his new job coordinating the anti-mafia fight]. . . . I was very clear with him and I assured him that I won't spare that section of the electorate on which his great electors base their power. . . ."

Later on Dalla Chiesa met Andreotti again: "I went to see Andreotti, and when I told him what I discovered about his supporters in Sicily, he went pale."

Dalla Chiesa's son comments: "I wondered all the time whether this 'declaration of intent' made to Andreotti was not the only real imprudence committed by my father . . . who, obviously, did not realize he had fully touched a formidable network of interests. . . . It is difficult to imagine that Andreotti, considered to be the best informed person in Italy, ignored the deeds and misdeeds of the friends of his friends [in Sicily]. . . ."