

Report from Rome by Liliana Celani and Marco Fanini

The last days of Giovanni Gorla

An avowed KGB spy sits in Parliament, applauding as the institutions crumble.

‘A government crisis in Italy, what else is new?’ will be the first thought of many Americans when, and if, they learn about the troubles of the government of Premier Giovanni Gorla, who was defeated Feb. 9 four times in a row during the secret vote on the *Finanziaria*, the Italian “Gramm-Rudman” budget-cutting bill which has been debated in the Senate for the last two years. On Feb. 10, Gorla resigned.

Indeed, the way the crisis unfolded is not dissimilar from the hundreds Italy has witnessed before: On top of the Communist and Radical parties’ opposition to the five-party *pentapartito* led by Gorla, came the secret vote of Christian Democratic “sharpshooters” (who break party discipline from the ambush of the secret ballot).

The sharpshooters were presumably aiming at replacing Gorla with Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti, who better reflects the present “New Yalta” trend in Europe, since he is a fervent admirer of Gorbachov and a friend of Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi.

Right after the October 1987 crash on the world’s stock markets, a spokesman for the Italian Confederation of Industry said that Italy needed a “strong government,” capable of guiding the economy through tempestuous times. Other top financiers echoed him saying that 1988 would be disastrous for the markets because an “era had ended.”

The scenario to replace Gorla by a “strong” government, was apparently plotted on the eve of the Christian

Democratic Party’s national congress by Andreotti, who has reached a deal with former Socialist Premier Bettino Craxi and the huge Communist Party.

The terms of the deal are not hard to imagine. In an article on the national unity government of 1976-79 which appeared in the weekly *Europeo* on Feb. 5, Andreotti wrote, “If [then Communist leader] Berlinguer had had the strength (or the ability) to hold fast, overcoming internal pressures, discouraging the march of the metalworkers and taking the defense of austerity all the way . . . Italian life could have evolved differently.”

Andreotti’s clear bid to try again, was warmly received by the Communists, who are now willing to block not only the metalworkers but every potential striker in Italy. The latest government statistics show that unemployment in medium-sized and big industry (over 500 workers) grew by 3.4% in 1987. Strikes have already begun. The first job of a “strong” government will be to send in the police; the second, to push through a savage budget-cutting bill that no one will dare to shoot down.

The “Christian Democratic faction games” that toppled Gorla, *giochi di corrente* as they are called here in Rome, are nothing new; nor is it new that the government can be easily demolished, since it essentially did not exist. Gorla, who took office on Aug. 1, after five years as treasury minister, had only one function: passing as fast as possible the *Finanziaria* budget cuts, before the financial crash and the chronic problems in the Milan stock

exchange get completely out of control.

But something is new indeed. Those Italians who watched the late-night TV news of Feb. 9, and the report on the parliamentary vote which defeated Gorla four times, probably lost their sardonic smiles when the TV cameras framed first the Communist Party section of the Parliament (which by itself occupies 30% of the seats) rejoicing at the defeat, and then the Hungarian prostitute Ilona Staller, much hyped as “La Cicciolina,” grinning and applauding at this atmosphere of “the last days of Pompeii.”

No wonder: In a recent interview with a Lebanese newspaper, picked up by the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera*, porno-starlet Cicciolina, who sits in the Italian Parliament as a Radical Party deputy, admitted that she was trained in Hungary as a spy, being the daughter of an interior ministry official. In the interview, Ilona Staller recalls that her first KGB missions were to corrupt an African official and an American senator visiting Hungary. The most recent mission the KGB assigned her, apparently, is to deal the final blow to whatever remains of Italian institutions, making sure that it is clear to everyone that the Parliament not only is unable to decide anything about Italy’s destiny, but also welcomes KGB whores and spies without even questioning their past.

Italy has been historically a country of great contrasts, but particularly since the Reagan-Gorbachov summit, these contrasts are becoming too striking: The same U.S. ally that was the first to sign cooperation contracts with the Strategic Defense Initiative, which sent six ships to the Gulf to support the American fleet, and as recently as early February had decided to welcome the American F-16 jet fighters leaving Spain, has a KGB spy in its national Parliament.