THE ITALIAN *SERVIZI SEGRETI*

FRAGMENTED AND SWAYED

1900-TODAY

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Italy, as a geographic location, has the longest recorded history of espionage and intelligence practice in the Western world. A complete and comprehensive evaluation and analysis of the intelligence services of Italy, from its unification as a set of foreign-ruled city-states to present-day, has not been undertaken or accomplished in English. This thesis fills this historical void. Additionally, this paper provides a historical recount of the Italian intelligence services: their organizational structures, their flaws and successes, and their role throughout major events in Italian history through the implementation of academic journals, news articles, and interviews in both English and Italian. Historically, the Italian intelligence apparatus has often been inefficacious and disjointed followed by periods of organizational reforms and strengthening. In the early 2000s, during one of these reformation periods, it appeared that the Italian intelligence apparatus was finally emerging from its troubled past. This emergence has recently been compromised by the rise of populism and presently the intelligence services must make a critical decision: to resemble their predecessors or begin a new effective era.

INTRODUCTION

Italy is arguably the most culturally and historically rich country in the Western world. From the Romans to the Renaissance, to the Peninsula's unification, to the Italian resistance fighters or *partigiani* in World War II, to the foundation of the Republic of Italy, its history is often marked positively and intertwined with the geographic beauty of the country. On the reverse side of these remarkable historical achievements is a dark history that is blackened by the rise of Fascism, collaboration with Hitler and the Axis powers, Nazi occupation, and post-war political terrorism. The underpinning of these tenebrous historical events is associated with the historically inefficacious and un-centralized Italian intelligence services.

Although Italy has the most extensive history of espionage in the Western world, it has historically maintained ineffective services followed by rapid reorganization and gradual evolution and strengthening. Its services have often fallen short of the baseline expectation of Western intelligence and national security practice, summarized by the Clinton White House, "to ensure the protection of […] (a) nation's fundamental and enduring needs: protect the lives and safety" of its citizens and "maintain the sovereignty" of the country (Clinton White House Archives para. 39). The first Roman service was pervasive and did not operate like a modern espionage and intelligence organization. The Venetian intelligence organization during the Renaissance, although more effective than its contemporary and historical counterparts, was infiltrated by agents of the English government. The regional pre-

unification intelligence services laid the foundation of the first decentralized intelligence structure of post-unification Italy, which yielded the defeat at Caporetto, the eventual rise of Mussolini, a former agent of the English MI5, and his creation of an intelligence apparatus that was analogous to the Nazi Gestapo. Although initially effective at quelling political opposition, this totalitarian intelligence structure not only failed its citizenry in guaranteeing its protection from domestic oppression. It also failed in its mission of maintaining Mussolini's control of the government. The partisan resistance fighters or *partigiani* in collaboration with the US and England proved themselves to be valuable intelligence operators. Unfortunately, these successes were short-lived as the intelligence services of the newly formed Republic of Italy failed to oust malign individuals which allowed themselves to be complicit in at least the covering up of the terrorist attacks of the Years of Lead. An intelligence reorganization toward the end of the Years of Lead witnessed two of the most catastrophic terror attacks in Italian history and did not prevent said attacks. Fortunately, the Italian intelligence apparatus, reactive to those two particular tragedies and terrorism in general, seemed to strengthen and improve, concluding the Years of Lead. However, the discovery of an archive of KGB documents in the late 1990s would reveal the extent of successful foreign interference, operation, misinformation, and espionage on the Peninsula during the Years of Lead. Partially in response to the investigation, the most recent reorganization of the intelligence apparatus occurred. This final reorganization has thus-far yielded successful prevention of Islamic terrorism in Italy. The rise of Populist politics in Italy jeopardizes this progress. These populist politicians threaten to distance Italy from the NATO alliance, over intelligence sharing regarding radical Islam, while fostering

closer relations with Moscow. It is this political environment that can and will decide the future of the Italian intelligence services. A future that will either be the continuation of the inefficacy and fragmentation that could lead to prolonged foreign intrusion and the compromise of its citizenry; or the determination to break from the precedent set by the ominous past through increased centralization and intelligence collaboration with allies which could permit a history anew that would coincide with the past glories of Italian history.

Chapter 1

A FRACTURED HISTORY AND FOUNDATION: A PRE-1900 OVERVIEW

Italy is a country best known historically for the Roman Empire, the Renaissance, and the foreign influence it was subjected to before the *Risorgimento* and unification. Italy was colonized regionally by many different and competing powers from the Germans to the Austrians, the French to the Normans, the Catalans to the Spanish, and the Arabic. Unfortunately for Italy, domestic and foreign competition for power and influence can be tracked to today much like the dialects in certain regions can be traced to yesterday. The modern Sicilian language uses a combination of Arabic words and pronunciation with a Spanish diction whereas German roots are reflected in the dialects of the north, particularly in the Venetian dialect. In a similar way, the fragmentation, competition, and decentralization of Italy's first intelligence apparatuses provided the weak foundation which has contributed to its susceptibility to be overtly pushed by its allies or covertly pulled by its adversaries. The intelligence services improved immensely from their first embryonic form in ancient Rome to the services of the Venetian Republic and ultimately to the agencies at the time of unification. However, these services were not perfect, and each came with a unique subset of problems. This chapter strives to provide an overview of the evolution of intelligence practice in geographic Italy, which lays the foundation for the Italian intelligence apparatus at the time of unification and entrance into the modern era.

Coincidentally, Italy as a geographical location, has the longest recorded history of espionage and intelligence practice in the western world, dating back to ancient Rome. Even still, this history is consistent with the more modern Italian

Intelligence services. The informal intelligence structure first put forth during the Roman Republic and continued to the late Roman Empire was “inefficacious” (Khan 125). There are four primary reasons for this: first the “generals since Caesar [...] only believed what they could see: terrain and troops [...] they distrusted spies and questioned the tools of prediction-dreams, omens, entrails, the mutterings of oracles” (Khan 125); second “Augustus and his successors during the first century of the empire did not rely on any one agency” for intelligence practice; third “the idea of a permanent, highly organized agency of this nature (espionage) was foreign to principles of city-state government common to classical Greece and Republican Rome”; and fourth Roman intelligence personnel “were regarded as a plague [...] their snooping had become unbearable” to the civilian population “and their general conduct [...] (especially) in fiscal matters, resembled that of a plundering army” (Sinnigen 65-66 and 69). Other reasons for the inefficacy of the Roman intelligence system were the lack of ability to verify information atop of the inherent distrust of subordinates on behalf of the Roman military leadership, combined with an ill-defined intelligence structure and place in general society, compounded by the aversion of their presence by the civilian populace. These weaknesses led to why “intelligence drove the outcome of only one” decisive Roman Republican victory, the victory over Carthage at the Metaurus River in 207 BC (Khan 125). Intelligence during the Empire was more frequently used “to detect and expose subversion” to the ruling regime within the civilian population than in warfighting (Sinnigen 66). The Roman secret service was made up of civilian “informers” and “supply sergeants whose original functions had been the purchase for and distribution of grain-frumentum-hence their name frumentarii” (Sinnigen 66). As the “frumentarii” served in the military, at the

discretion of the Roman government, while being in close contact with grain farmers and the population at large, they were "in an excellent position to observe and to report on all kinds of situations of interest to the government" (Sinnigen 66). Their official duties included being "couriers, tax collectors, policemen [...] and carrying out political assassinations" (Sinnigen 68). The frumentarii, with their wide range of responsibility, and their loosely defined regulations, preyed on the domestic population effectively and maintained internal power and influence for whoever was at the helm of the "central government," but were not tasked to consider foreign threats and the application of intelligence against enemies abroad. In fact, the idea of foreign intelligence gathering as defined according to a pre-modern point of view did not properly materialize until the rise of the republic of Venice and the role of the ambassador.

The ambassadors of the various city-states in Italy, whether it be the republic of Genoa, Florence, or Venice, were dispatched either to other city-states within present-day Italy or other nation-states in Europe. Wherever they were sent they were often accepted with open arms by foreign princes, courts, and kings. Their position in society not only offered them great access to the personal lives of the ruling class, but also insight into the policies, operations, and plans of each nation. When this information was disseminated to the ambassador's country or state of origin it could be used to greatly influence negotiations between the two sovereign states into the favor of the ambassador's home country. As demonstrated by Daniela Frigo (10) when she quotes the 99th Doge of Genoa, Andrea Spinola's *Dizionario filosofico-politico-storico*, it wasn't until the Renaissance that the ambassador's function was "often and much more realistically viewed as a sort of 'honored' espionage" by ascertaining that

"spying on the designs and secrets of princes is the proper business of ambassadors." The Venetian republic was unique in that it was the only Italian state whose espionage and intelligence collection "was not solely restricted to the formal exchanges between ambassadors and the ruler" (Iordanou 10). In fact, Venetian ambassadors did not do the espionage themselves, "they employed and managed their own spies and informers" (Iordanou 9). A specific example of this occurred in 1586, where the Venetian ambassador to Spain reported back to Venice "that he had 'recruited' a blue-blooded spy from within the royal Spanish entourage" (Iordanou 9-10). The structure of Venice's intelligence can be gleaned from this example. This spy would report on the happenings in the highest annals of Spain's government, submit that information to the Venetian ambassador in exchange for "fine muscat wines" because "his status precluded monetary bribes," who would then prepare "a meticulous" and "detailed intelligence report" that was "written in cipher to ensure secrecy" that would be delivered to the Council of Ten who "encompassed Venice's diplomatic and intelligence operations, military affairs and other legal matters of state security" (Iordanou 4 and 9-10). This was the first instance of a pre-modern process for foreign collection, analysis, and dissemination. As for domestic collection, the council of Ten established a culture where "gathering and divulging information that pertained to state security was considered an act of good citizenship" and exploited it with the invention of "the pre-modern version of surveillance cameras, *bocche di leone*" (Iordanou 7). These receptacles "were post-boxes in whose orifice denizens were invited to deposit denunciations on any issue of public order and security" (Iordanou 7). The government was hence informed by receiving also a "blizzard of worthless reports" on every civilian matter, major or minor, which overall helped maintain

power and influence for the Venetian government over its citizenry (Iordanou 7). The efficacy of Venice's centralized intelligence system is why it is a historical anomaly among the other Italian city-states who were much weaker in terms of intelligence gathering and structure. Despite its strength the Venetian intelligence structure had its own shortcomings especially as it pertained to foreign spies. For example, Guido Giannetti "work(ed) in Venice as an informant" where he "provided Elizabeth and her secretary of State William Cecil [...] with fresh intelligence on Italian and continental politics" (Pirillo 62). It was also through "Venetian mercantile networks" that Giannetti and another informant Pietro Bizzarri "succeeded in delivering their dispatches to the Elizabethan court" (Pirillo 61). If Venice could not prevent intelligence gathering on its soil, then it can be safely assumed that other Italian city states would not possess this prevention ability either. This lack of counterintelligence allowed Bizzarri, as reported in Pirillo (60), "to cast a wide net for information drawing from major centers of news production, such as Rome [...] as well as smaller cities such as Milan, Genoa, or Messina" and provide "his English patrons with detailed information on the shifting balance of power in the Mediterranean." The fragmentation of Italy allowed a foreign power, in this case England, to "overcome its isolation in Europe after Henry VIII's break with Rome " by allowing it to gather "intelligence on continental and Mediterranean affairs" (Pirillo 67). This fragmentation of Italy would be exploited vastly during the development of intelligence and diplomacy in foreign nations until it tapered off slightly during Italy's lead up to unification and during the *Risorgimento* movement.

During the beginning of the 19th century, Napoleon's France conquered Italy. In doing so, he divided the "peninsula" into "three entities: the northern parts which

were annexed to the French empire (Piedmont, Liguria, Parma, Piacenza, Tuscany, and Rome), the newly created Kingdom of Italy (Lombardy, Venice, Reggio, Modena, Romagna) ruled by Napoleon himself, and the Kingdom of Naples, which was first ruled by Napoleon's brother Joseph Bonaparte, but then passed to Napoleon's brother-in-law Joachim Murat" (Office of Historian US State Department para. 2). Although it was divided into three sections, each region was controlled by France, in this sense Italy had its first taste for unification during this period, ironically while being ruled by a foreign power. During the French occupation, "the ideals of freedom [...] equality [...] and the concept of nationalism" were "introduced" (Office of Historian US State Department para. 3). These sentiments would inspire the eventual unification, even with the forced abdication of Napoleon's throne in 1814 after the signing of the Treaty of Fontainebleau and the "redistribution of territory by the Congress of Vienna" (Office of Historian US State Department para. 4) which saw that "the old rulers, the dynasts, the princes, the generals, the hierarchs" returned "to their citadels of power and privilege" in all of the major cities and territories of Italy (Salomone 171). When the old guard resumed their posts on the peninsula "each and every State" had an "intelligence organization" that "was already active" but they were organized and operated independently of the other States (Colonna Vilasi 59). For example, the "task of protecting peoples' security" through intelligence and information gathering was given to "the 'Buon Governo' and the police" in Tuscany, the "Police directorate and lieutenants" in Lombardo-Veneto, the Duchy of Parma under the name the "General Police Directorate," the "civilian militia" and "volunteer corps" in Modena, and "the King Secretariat" in "the Kingdom of Two Sicilies" (Colonna Vilasi 59-60). The independent structure of each service and lack of "information sharing" is why the

1831 and 1848 unification uprisings were "crushed by the Austrians" (Colonna Vilasi 59) (Office of Historian US State Department para. 6). It was not until "after the revolutionary coups in the first half of the century" that the "pre-unitarian States stepped up the security apparatus" with "intelligence and information sharing" (Colonna Vilasi 59).

The beefing up of intelligence and information collaboration between the States in conjunction with the diplomacy and guidance of Count Camillo Benso di Cavour, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Piedmont and Sardinia propelled the Italian independence movement a step further toward unification. Under Cavour, overt diplomacy was implemented to bankroll "the French press in favor of his policy" and to "supply Hungarian fighters" with arms who were rising against the Austro-Hungarian regime while intelligence was used to send "his faithful agents" to "Tuscany, the Romagne and Emilia" (Salomone 184) to "sponsor the unification" internally (Colonna Vilasi 62). Cavour's diplomatic mission in France was also supplemented by great intelligence work carried out by Virginia Oldoini, the countess of Castiglione, his cousin. She was sent because her "attractiveness" and "ambition" was a good fit "with the sovereign" which would allow her "to influence Napoleon's soul and convert him to the Italian cause" (Charbonnier para. 20)[1]. Once she convinced Napoleon III, she would obtain his approval of the Italian unification movement in writing which Cavour would leak "in a report drawn up by an Italian agent in Austria" to force Napoleon III's hand to "clear the aggressive Austrian military policy" in favor of Italy (Charbonnier para. 28). The man who concocted the

[1] "L'avvenenza e l'ambizione di Virginia [...] mandare la contessina a Parigi per influire sull'animo di Napoleone e convertirlo alla causa italiana"

plan was Colonel Giuseppe Govone who would be called upon to head the "Information and Military Operations Office of the Sardinian Army" as the leak would put France and the Kingdom of Piedmont and Sardinia on a path to war against Austria (Charbonnier para. 29). Govone was no stranger to intelligence, in 1856, he headed "the forerunner of the Italian military intelligence" which was called "'Intelligence Office' or known further as the 'General Staff (SM) Information Office'" (Colonna Vilasi 62). Immediately preceding the Franco-Austrian war, Govone was tasked with: "organizing the Piedmontese information network against Austria" (Charbonnier para. 33)[2]. He did so by setting up a "telegraph line [...] between the Headquarters in San Salvatore and the Army corps in Casale" where he would distribute "ciphers to his agents behind the lines" that were "based on characters and theatrical terms" to "report on the strength of the Austrian troops" (Charbonnier para. 35-36)[3]. His intelligence network became overextended in Lombardy-Veneto where it was "identified by the Austrian police" causing a blow to his network that was "very serious, but not irreparable" as he "already organized a network of non-commissioned officers of the carabinieri" who remained "behind the lines" (Charbonnier para. 35-36)[4]. Govone must receive some praise for his

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[2] "Govone si trova a organizzare la rete informativa piemontese contro l'Austria"

[3] "Govone fa stendere una linea telegrafica fra il Quartier Generale a San Salvatore e i Corpi d'Armata a Casale [...] distribuisce ai propri agenti dietro le linee cifrari per inviare messaggi che sono basati su personaggi e termini teatrali [...] devono riferire sulla consistenza delle truppe austriache"

[4] "La rete di agenti è estesa a tutto il Lombardo-Veneto, ma viene individuata dalla polizia austriaca [...] il colpo è gravissimo, ma non irreparabile [...] Govone ha già organizzato una rete di sottufficiali dei carabinieri [...] dietro le linee"

organization of the intelligence network that allowed multiple agents to remain undetected behind enemy lines even after a massive discovery of one of his networks. He must also be credited with gathering quality and actionable intelligence to disseminate to his field officers throughout both the Franco-Austrian and the Austro-Prussian wars, even during the steep defeat at Custoza in 1866. Austrian generals would later recount this battle, writing that Govone's "general colleagues stood with their divisions/battalions totally inert as if 'caught by a spell that blocks them at the gates of Villafranca'" (Charbonnier para. 38)[5]. Charbonnier (para. 38)[6] affirms that the defeat was not a result of poor intelligence gathering, rather a failure in its distribution and reception on behalf of the generals as "they did not know or did not want to know the information/intelligence available" with "jealousy and spite" doing "the rest." This is analogous to one of the greatest American intelligence failures: Pearl Harbor. Martin Petersen (para. 119), a career intelligence analyst and former acting executive director of the CIA, describes it best in his interview on the Intelligence Matters podcast with Michael Morrell: "on December 7th, 1941, Japanese Zeros streamed through [...] and attacked [...] where the Arizona Memorial now sits [...] which to this day gives up pieces of sailors and marines still trapped inside [...] I would tell you that that is what happens to a nation that has all the pieces of the puzzle but does not have a Directorate of Intelligence to put them together." The two instances are analogous

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[5] "i suoi colleghi generali, come scriveranno gli austriaci, se ne stanno con i loro reparti totalmente inerti, come '*colti da un incantesimo che li blocca alle porte di Villafranca*'"

[6] "non hanno saputo o voluto leggere le informazioni disponibili [...] gelosie e ripicche [...] il resto"

because the intelligence leading up to both Custoza and Pearl Harbor was available, while the machinery for analysis and dissemination failed miserably, causing approximately 8,000 casualties at Custoza and 3,500 at Pearl Harbor. What Petersen is suggesting is that the centralization of intelligence is paramount in being able to analyze and disseminate accurate information that can be used to prevent attacks or catastrophic losses decisively and effectively on the battlefield. It was this centralization that made Renaissance Venice an anomaly in maintaining power over and security for its citizenry.

Italy, as a nation, would not have a semi-unified intelligence apparatus until 1898 when the "new Prime Minister Luigi Pelloux gave the Intelligence apparatus full autonomy in the protection of National security and in coping with the frequent riots and anti-militarist propaganda" (Colonna Vilasi 63). Between 1866 and 1898, the Italian intelligence apparatus had more reorganizations than it did successes. In 1874, "the intelligence stopped an insurrection plot in Bologna by the anarchists Andrea Costa and Mikhail Bakunin, and arrested in Florence Anna Kuliscioff, Andrea Costa's lover and assistant" (Colonna Vilasi 63). This is the only noted intelligence success during this period. A failure is also registered during this time frame, "the joint action of Intelligence, Home Office, and Foreign Affairs, focused on Garibaldi's attempts to conquer Rome and tried to provoke an insurrection that would give a hand to Garibaldi's expedition" (Colonna Vilasi 63). This insurrection attempt can be labeled unsuccessful because Rome was not included in Italy's unification until 1870, three years later. As for the reorganizations during this time, in 1876, "the Home Office information apparatus had a significant expansion and a consequent reorganization during the Left Government" (Colonna Vilasi 63) and in 1890 "the Information or "I"

Office was reconstructed with its prevalent functions being policing and counterintelligence or counterespionage" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 7)[7]. Outside of necessary reorganization, the lack of centralization of intelligence in Italy can further be gleaned from the seven separate intelligence organizations that unified Italy possessed entering the 20th century. Indeed, Colonna Vilasi (62 and 64) confirms that "during the first forty years (1861-1901) Italian Intelligence was constituted by" more than seven separate organizations: "the Royal Carabinieri Corps Intelligence, the most secret of all, dedicated to the collection of information especially in the countryside, linked to the royal family; the Guardia di Finanza Intelligence, with institutional purposes; the Ministry of War and the Ministry of the Navy Intelligence, formed by a network of informers, military attaches and officers abroad; the "I" General Staff Office (Army); the Home Office Intelligence, divided into Polizia alta and bassa; the King and the Prime Minister Intelligence, one for each of the two authorities, autonomous, limited, free from the military supervision; (and) the Foreign Affairs Intelligence, spread in diplomatic representations, and based on informants living abroad." Italian intelligence would grow and gain strength as it moved closer toward centralization at the dawn of the new century.

Italy may have the longest recorded history of espionage and intelligence gathering as mentioned by Allen Dulles (26), the first civilian director of the CIA: "there was probably more espionage in one year in any medieval Italian city than in the four-year War of Succession." However, from its origins in ancient Rome to the

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[7] "l'Ufficio informazioni fu ricostituito nel 1890 con prevalenti funzioni di polizia e controspionaggio"

end of the 19th century and the peninsula's unification, it is a history periled by disorganization, confusion, and failure. As the Italian intelligence apparatus grew to overcome these challenges, it was then confronted with the stresses of the First World War and unprecedented domestic competition from the meteoric rise of the Fascist regime under Benito Mussolini. These stresses would prove too great for the newly unified Italy in the early 20th century and the history of a weak intelligence apparatus would carry through well beyond WWI and the rise of Fascism.

Chapter 2

NEWLY UNIFIED AND IMMEDIATELY CHALLENGED: 1900 TO THE RISE OF FASCISM/MUSSOLINI

At the start of the twentieth century, Italy was unified officially. This unification was more in principle than it was in practice. The city-states that comprised the unified Peninsula had existed independently for hundreds of years. The ever-evolving relationship between the city-states and unified Italy is analogous to the dynamics of the intelligence apparatus at the time. Immediately prior to 1900, there were seven separate bodies, often regionally based, that made up Italy's national security and intelligence structure. In September of 1900, they would attempt to be unified into a single office for intelligence and a separate organization for counterintelligence. It would be the first of many intelligence reorganizations in Italy during the modern era. The newly consolidated intelligence structure would try to showcase its strength against a weaker African nation during the age of new western imperialism in 1911. During the conflict that was the Italo-Turkish war, the strengths, weaknesses, and shortcomings of this new apparatus would be on display. The identification of organizational defects would yield positive change and the strengthening of the structure up and through World War I, until Mussolini took power, strengthened the intelligence services at the expense of judicial due process and morality, and led the newly formed peninsula on a path to the Second World War. This chapter attempts to capture the natural evolution of the Italian security services under a new federal government and delineate between the natural strengthening and success of the pre-Mussolini security services to the unnatural and unethical strengthening of the security services and secret police under Mussolini.

The first unified office of intelligence was formed in September of 1900. It was named *l'Ufficio I del Corpo di Stato Maggiore dell'Esercito* or the I (Information) Office of the Army Staff Corps. The first unified and federal Italian intelligence agency was under the command of the Italian Army. The first director of this newly established unit was a former carabinieri colonel named Felice De Chaurand de Saint Eustache. The office would have three directors within its first five years. Colonel De Chaurand de Saint Eustache left in 1902, he was succeeded by two "Bersaglieri colonels" named "Vincenzo Garioni e Silvio Negri" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 11)[8]. Vincenzo Garioni was at the helm of the office from 1902 to 1905. Silvio Negri's leadership spanned from 1905-1912. It was under his leadership that Italy's intelligence would be tested in the war against Libya in 1911, then part of the Ottoman Empire. Newly established bureaucratic agencies historically struggle in carrying out their duties at first because of competition between existing institutions, lack of clarity in their legal responsibilities, chronic understaffing, and budgetary issues. On top of these known dilemmas that face a newly born office, rampant change in directorship can cause seismic shifts in organization-wide goals especially when the first director comes from a law enforcement background and the two successive directors from military backgrounds. All of these factors contribute to both the overall "weak organic strength" and "scarce budget" of the I Office (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 11)[9]. The first three directors realized the need for strengthening and "attempted"

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[8] "i suoi successori-i colonnelli dei Bersaglieri Vincenzo Garioni e Silvio Negri"

[9] "Fonti storiche narrano di una 'forza organica molto ridotta' e di un 'budget esiguo'"

to “overcome” the institutional shortcomings by using “innovative instrumentation” and techniques, such as “ciphers and cryptography” and through the “collaboration of geographers and archaeologists” who were “engaged in research” in places of interest to the Italian government such as “Tripolitania and Cyrenaica” (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 11)[10]. Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, both regions in present day Libya, were targets for annexation by unified and imperialist Italy during the Italo-Turkish war. It would be the I Office’s first test. It was a test that was ultimately successful but would still lead to much-needed changes in the I Office. For example, the I Office often clashed with other civilian organizations that had an “overlapping of tasks” and even worse, with the troops that “reported information to the Supreme Command without passing through” the I Office (Colonna-Vilasi 65). Once again, there was no centralization to the Italian intelligence apparatus, information would be shared either with the I Office or with the Supreme Command, with limited to no information passing between the two establishments. This is analogous to the US intelligence failure that preceded the attacks of September 11, 2001. Generally speaking, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) possessed overlapping duties with regards to intelligence pertaining to Islamic terrorism and competed against one another bureaucratically instead of collaborating. The results of this competition would be deadly. The Italo-Turkish war was resultant in several intelligence improvements, such as: “topographic maps for the troops,” “General Staff monographs” and “the

[10] “‘cercarono di supplire’ servendosi di ‘strumenti innovativi,’ quali ‘i cifrari e la crittografia’, e della ‘collaborazione di geografi e archeologi impegnati nelle missioni di ricerca in regioni come la Tripolitania e la Cirenaica’”

Military Maps Office" (Colonna-Vilasi 65). However, by the "outbreak of the First World War the Italian Intelligence" would again be "fragmented" with "the military service focused almost exclusively on the troops at the front, while the police on domestic affairs" (Colonna-Vilasi 65).

Preparedness for the First World War would bring needed strengthening to the Italian Intelligence services, much like the Italo-Turkish war but these changes would eventually be undermined internally by Mussolini, then a socialist news journalist and his relationship with a foreign government and its intelligence service. Change is brought into organizations to rectify known problems. The established issues with Italian intelligence have been already discussed: the lack of coordination, centralization, and information sharing between the I Office and Supreme Command. These problems were further exacerbated through the lack of communication between different branches of the military. A striking example of this was that the Information Service of the Royal Navy at the beginning of World War I did not "collaborate with the army" (Colonna Vilasi 66). Instead, Italian naval intelligence had "an agreement with the corresponding French corps" where the two would share information and intelligence (Colonna Vilasi 66). Although at the time France was an ally, the Navy's reluctance to share intelligence with its own Army counterpart further weakened not only Italy's military intelligence but the strength of Italy's military as a whole due to lack of possible coordination and planning. This weakness became obvious to the leadership during a time of war and triggered a massive restructuring of Italian military intelligence that started in 1916 and spilled over into 1917. The 1916 reforms converted the I Office into the Supreme Command I Office which "focused exclusively on abroad and counter-intelligence" and yielded more "strategic" power

than the Information from the Troops on the Battlefield Office and established the "Supreme Command Situation and Operations Office" which solely focused "on the battlefield troops" (Colonna Vilasi 66). An overview of the composition of the newly reformed "Supreme Command information structure" was as follows: "a department commander based in Rome, in Milan, and Udine, three mobilized sections (under each of the department commanders), namely U (Udine), M (Milan), R (Rome), and seventeen detached centers abroad" (Colonna Vilasi 66). An unintended consequence of the R division in Rome was that it often overlapped in responsibility with "the Carabinieri counter-intelligence activities" (Colonna Vilasi 66). The newly reorganized military intelligence would fail miserably before it would succeed, following a second reorganization. The crowning failure of the military intelligence structure after its first reorganization during World War I was the Italian defeat at Caporetto in 1917. As a response to the Italian massacre at Caporetto and the overlapping of responsibilities with those of the Supreme Command, the *Ufficio Centrale di investigazione* (UCI) was formed to "interconnect [...] existing military departments" while possessing "counter-intelligence and military police" responsibilities "outside of warzones" (Colonna Vilasi 66). The UCI joined the counterintelligence functions previously of the R division and the Carabinieri into one. It was this newly unified counterintelligence capability of the UCI that "quelled the growing anti-militarist propaganda" and uncovered and "dismantled an enemy spy network with the arrest of several agents, an operation aimed at redeeming the Caporetto defeat" in Rome toward the end of 1917 (Colonna Vilasi 66).

There were other small accomplishments during this era that could be attributed to the military intelligence apparatus prior to both reorganizations (1915),

following the first reorganization (1916) but prior to the defeat at Caporetto and the second reorganization (October-November 1917), and after both restructurings (1918). The success that arrived in May of 1915 can be attributed to Luisa Zeni, a woman who "crossed the border and entered Austrian territory" disguising herself "as Josephine Müller" a woman who "claimed to have fled from Italy to return to Austria with "false documents" (Charbonnier para. 47)[11]. She strategically positioned herself at the "Union Hotel, a dangerous place but also a mine of information, frequented by the command officers of the city" and befriended the "Evidenzbureau" in order to establish "a network of spies" and "an information network (reseau) in Trentino and Tyrol" on the implicit behalf of Italy and the "Italian Information Service" (Charbonnier para. 45-47)[12]. According to her commanding officer at the Information from the Troops on the Battlefield Office, Colonel Tullio Marchetti, she was able to produce "several reports with precise, excellent military news" (prodotto parecchie relazioni con notizie militari precise, ottime) (Charbonnier para. 48). The next reported military intelligence success came in February of 1917 on behalf of "the Information service of the Royal Navy" who "identified and neutralized [...] the Austrian espionage center for Italy in Zurich" in what became known as the "Zurich

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[11] "Luisa Zeni passa il confine ed entra in territorio austriaco si presenta come Josephine Müller, dichiara di essere fuggita dall'Italia per rientrare in Austria [...] i documenti falsi"

[12] "Union Hotel, luogo pericoloso ma anche miniera di informazioni, frequentato com'è dagli ufficiali dei comandi stanziati in città [...] l'Evidenzbureau [...] una rete di spie[...] Servizio Informazioni italiano che crea [...] un reseau d'informazione in Trentino e Tirolo"

Coup" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 12)[13]. Lastly, throughout the war many intelligence and espionage technologies and procedures were improved, only to be recognized after the conclusion of the First World War. These "innovations" were: "aerial reconnaissance, decryption, sympathetic inks, (and) newspaper ads" (Colonna Vilasi 66). These "accomplishments" can be attributed to the success of one individual or one member of the military intelligence structure. As such, the defeat at Caporetto is a more accurate symptom of the Italian intelligence service at the time than its minor achievements were. At Caporetto "German and Austro-Hungarian forces broke the Italian lines, killing 40,000 Italian soldiers and capturing more than 250,000" (Khan 130) because "Italian Intelligence during the First World War suffered from confusion and superficiality," demonstrated a "lack of an overall vision and a feasible coordination between military and civilian authorities," and possessed "a multiplication of Intelligence structures" (Colonna Vilasi 67), which contributed to the Austro-Hungarians finding of "the keys to almost all [Italy's] codes, even the most difficult and most secret" (Khan 130). There would be a third reorganization in an attempt to recuperate the intelligence service from the First World War and shift its focus from a military and warfighting purpose to a domestic and peacetime mission. The 1919 reform dismantled the *Ufficio Centrale di investigazione*, the organization responsible for wartime counterintelligence and "unmasking the deserters," and established the *Divisione affari generali e riservati* (DAGR) which had two distinct subdivisions: "the Public order section" and the

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[13] "Proprio il Servizio Informazioni della Regia Marina [...] 'Colpo di Zurigo'[...] individuare e neutralizzare [...] la centrale dello spionaggio austriaco per l'Italia a Zurigo"

"Foreign Division" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 13)[14]. The Public order section was responsible for "defense of state security and controlling subversive activity" whereas the Foreign Division was responsible for "collecting information on the activities of citizens of other nations" domestically (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 13)[15]. Before all three reorganizations (1916-1919), amidst the trials and tribulations of the First World War for Italian Intelligence (1915-1918), a warning light from within the Peninsula would begin to blink and would be ignored. It was the precursor to a Fascist state which would crush bureaucratic institutions and install its own in line with the party, dismantling all the progress Italy had made in intelligence and national security to that point.

The personification of the blinking red light was then a little-known news journalist in charge of the pro-war newspaper *Il Popolo d'Italia*, the *People of Italy*. This same man would shake Italy's newly formed institutions to their core, especially the intelligence services, in the decades to come. Ironically, well before he would seize power, he was a paid agent for a foreign intelligence service. This individual, of course, was Benito Mussolini. While he was the editor in chief of *Il Popolo d'Italia*, he was on the payroll of MI5, England's security service. He was provided with "weekly payments of 100 pounds" in exchange for the printing of "pro-war

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[14] "lo scioglimento dell'Ufficio Centrale di investigazione (UCI) [...] smascherare i disertori [...] Divisione affari generali e riservati (DAGR) [...] la Sezione ordine pubblico [...] la Divisione stranieri"

[15] "difesa della sicurezza dello Stato e controllo dell'attività sovversive [...] raccogliere informazioni sulle attività di cittadini di altre nazioni nel nostro paese"

propaganda to keep Italy on board" with "Britain and France in the fight against Germany" (Cooper para. 2-3). Outside of publishing propaganda, Mussolini would instill his pro-war ideals with violence. The Cambridge historian Peter Martland, who discovered the weekly MI5 allowance to Il Duce, believed that through Mussolini's recruitment of "thugs to beat up poverty-stricken peace protesters" that were "downtrodden by the war," in order "to prevent them from agitating against it," lies the foundation or "precursor" to "his Fascist black shirts" (Cooper para. 8). The use of violence as a "legitimate political tool" is and would become a staple of Fascist policy (Cooper para. 9). The significance of Mussolini's collaboration and cooperation with British security services is two-fold. The first is that before he rose to power, he was used as a pawn to facilitate and aid the foreign policy and military goals of a foreign nation, a pattern which would be repeated through future collaboration with both Winston Churchill and especially Adolf Hitler, contributing to Italy's image in the modern era as a state that could and would willingly be manipulated by allies and adversaries alike. The second is that unintentionally, the British partially bankrolled and aided the development of Fascism. They would later aid resistance forces through intelligence channels to help defeat a man they once supported. This is the first modern instance of British intelligence involvement on the Italian peninsula, it would certainly not be the last. Three years after the third reorganization of Italian intelligence during and immediately following the First World War, in 1922, Mussolini was elected the youngest Prime Minister of Italy. In his new role Mussolini would "systematically dismantle" the "social and political reforms of the previous half century [...] to be replaced by a totalitarian Fascist regime that placed the security of the state above all else" (Savella 779). The intelligence apparatus would be

strengthened at the expense of the pre-existing bureaucratic, apolitical, and ethical intelligence and security service. Domestic intelligence organizations would be replaced with an effective yet equally unethical secret police force with the menacing acronym of OVRA.

Historians remain divided on what the acronym of OVRA stood for. Some believe that the acronym had no real significance outside of sounding ominous and others believe that it stood for: *Organizzazione per la Vigilanza e la Repressione dell'Antifascismo* or Organization for the Vigilance and Repression of Anti-Fascism. Either way, this secret police organization was analogous to a historically more sinister and infamous German organization: The Gestapo. The marked difference between the two was Arturo Bocchini's OVRA "was able to effectively squelch opposition to Mussolini's regime without resorting to the wholesale murder that characterized the Nazi" secret police (Savella 779). Even without genocide, the OVRA was responsible for "protect(ing) Mussolini and help(ing) to create the illusion of consensus surrounding his regime" in order to "subvert Italy's liberal institutions and achieve totalitarian control" (Savella 779). A totalitarian grip of all governmental institutions tramples the purpose of western and democratic intelligence practice which serves to maintain the security of the country and its people from threats both foreign and domestic. The OVRA's contradictory role only permitted one of these: the security of the Fascist state at the expense of the citizenry. The roots of OVRA can be found well before its 1926 foundation. The roots begin with Mussolini's designation as Prime Minister in 1922 and start to strengthen significantly through 1924 and 1925. In June 1924, for example, the Socialist politician and Fascist "opposition deputy Giacomo Matteotti" was assassinated signaling a strengthening of totalitarianism and

definitive suppression of any moral or civil opposition to the ruling Fascist regime (Savella 780). The assassination of Matteotti would be followed by concrete political action when on January 3rd, 1925, Mussolini not only declared himself dictator of Italy during his "coup d'état" but also "abolished all opposition parties and constitutional guarantees for political" rivals including but not limited to: "Socialists, Anarchists, Democratic Republicans, Christian Democrats and non-Catholic religious groups" (Savella 780, 784). These events laid the groundwork for the foundation of the OVRA on November 6th, 1926 when "Mussolini's government passed a new law authorizing an official political police" headed by Arturo Bocchini who would take "advantage of yet another, more important, piece of special legislation" established that same year, "the police code of 1926 (*Testo Unico delle Leggi di Pubblica Sicurezza*), which conferred sweeping powers on police authorities" (Savella 783-784). Under the police code of 1926, Bocchini was able to liberate the OVRA from "the territorial restrictions of the regular provincial police," place "these inspectorates under his direct control at Public Security Headquarters, bypassing the regular chain of command" and staff "them with hand-picked men [...] assisted by a handful of agents adept at stakeouts, patient ferreting out of information, and impersonation" (Savella 784). On top of Bocchini's removal of the bureaucratic chains that ensure organizational compliance with the law, he was also able to obtain "from Mussolini a 15-fold increase in the government budget" (Savella 784). The officers of OVRA were tasked with "espionage and infiltration" of "subversive parties" using "well-paid informants and agents provocateurs" and maintaining "a centralized registry of politically 'dangerous' people" (Savella 784, 787). Unfortunately, this is not the type of centralization of intelligence that is ethically permissible or strengthens a legitimate

government. This pre-computer age and Orwellian surveillance program was criminally effective because its omnipotence was gleaned from its illegality. The 158,000 files that “survive of this archive” consist of a “light brown folder on the face of which the police entered the full name and parents' names of the individual, a list of all the relevant documents contained in the file, and brief descriptions of the subject's political affiliation and degree of dangerousness (Savella 787). On top of this information the files also contained “full personal data [...], a detailed physical description [...], a biography up to the opening date of the file, periodic updates (regulations required updates every six months and, after 1934, every three months), and copies of all police documents” (Savella 787). The OVRA would use these files to make determinations for arrests and exilement. In essence, “the Fascists removed ‘due process’ from police work” permitting the OVRA to “send person(s) suspected of subversive activity to a remote location in the south of Italy,” presumably far from where they actually lived, “for an indefinite period of time” (Savella 792). Through these questionable surveillance and detainment programs the OVRA obtained the “psychological impression of informants being everywhere” which was once again analogous or “similar to the Gestapo in Nazi Germany” (Savella 790). Taken together, all three of these methods, illegal surveillance, swift detainment, and psychological oppression, contributed to the “mastery” over the citizenry and “opposition with remarkably few police agents [...], competent people, skillful use of legislation, (and) informants” that “render(ed) all clandestine opposition totally ineffectual” while maintaining “a nearly impenetrable curtain of protection around Mussolini” (Savella 781, 793). This curtain would fall by 1943 before being completely tattered in 1945. The OVRA’s strength would not be without limit or by any means indefinite. Much

like the intelligence and security structure of newly unified Italy during World War I the OVRA would be strained with the Second World War. Distracted or spread too thin by the war, the OVRA would ultimately fail in quelling an uprising on behalf of the *Partigiani*, the Italian Resistance, who with aid from the Allied powers would prevail in World War II and the Italian civil war. It was not solely the fault of the OVRA, although they were tasked with the lion's share of state security, equally culpable was the fourth reorganized military intelligence structure, which beyond its 1927 foundation, possessed the previously discussed problems inherent in a newly formed government entity. This new organization was the *Servizio di Informazioni Militare* (SIM) or Military Information Service. It "paired" the Air Force and Navy's information services, "the Servizio Informazioni dell'Aeronautica (SIA) and the Servizio Informazioni Segrete della Marina (SIS)" and had a "brief period" of being "an autonomous counter-intelligence service" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 14)[16]. This specific structure would "remain unchanged until September 8, 1943, the date of the armistice with the Anglo-Americans" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 14)[17]. Regardless of SIM's autonomy, its attempt at the centralization of military intelligence, and its prolonged and unchanged existence, it was subverted and extinguished by the morality and strength of the resistance fighters. Once again,

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[16] "Affiancavano [...] il Servizio Informazioni dell'Aeronautica (SIA) e il Servizio Informazioni Segrete della Marina (SIS) [...] una breve parentesi [...] Servizio autonomo di controspionaggio"

[17] "questa struttura rimase invariata fino all'8 settembre 1943, data dell'armistizio con gli anglo-americani"

despite the most drastic reformation to date, the removal of bureaucratic limits, the encroaching of civil protections, and the sidestepping of legal restraint, the intelligence and security apparatus would fail. It would not only continually fail in protecting its citizenry from tyranny and civil war, but it would also fail at maintaining the regime that incited those occurrences.

The improvements of a democratic and unified Italian intelligence structure would be demolished by the installation of Mussolini and his totalitarian regime. A regime that would use secret police and intelligence to infringe on its citizenry to maintain state security. A task that it would still ultimately fail for several reasons including the resistance of the will of the people and the stresses of a Second World War followed by a civil war. The shortcomings of Mussolini's national security apparatus and the simultaneous intelligence successes of the Partisan resistance and its allies will be examined in the following chapter. It was at this point in history that "the major powers" recognized "that intelligence could contribute critically to military victory" and as such "intelligence" began to be "institutionalized everywhere" (Khan 131). It would be during the Second World War that Italy would first be confronted with a unique and two-fold situation: the conflict and competition of domestic intelligence against foreign intelligence.

Chapter 3

THE BIRTH OF ITALIAN DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE CONFLICT: THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The weight of the past can often be a hindrance to progress or change, sometimes it is impossible to escape altogether. The Italian peninsula would learn this directly. Italy with its revolutions and unification not yet a distant memory, would again have to establish itself against governmental oppression with an already war-torn landscape serving as the backdrop. Drawing on Mussolini's history of being a paid agent for England during the First World War, Churchill would correspond secretly with *Il Duce* to secure the foreign policy agenda for Britain. Mussolini would try to liberate himself from his history of aiding the British by ignoring Churchill's messages. In doing so Mussolini positioned his intelligence apparatus in the crosshairs of England. This was an intelligence apparatus that bungled opportunity for improvement between the rise of Fascism and the Second World War. This chapter examines the organizational jealousy and competition that arose from Mussolini's distrust of an intelligence service separate from his control, the ability and potential of a non-State entity to undermine official Italian diplomacy and intelligence, and the rise of a capable force supported by Western intelligence that would lay the foundation of the intelligence services after the Second World War.

In the 21 year, "inter-war" period, ample opportunity for improvement of Italian intelligence existed, yet little was undertaken (Williams 882). In fact, this period "marked the decline of the fortunes of the Italian intelligence community" (Williams 882). There is a myriad of reasons for this. Primarily, competition and organizational jealousy between the "multitude of rival agencies [...] is at the root of

the overall lack of major breakthroughs and operational successes of Italian intelligence" (Williams 887). The rivalry between the SIM, founded in 1927, and the OVRA, founded in 1926, is a microcosm of the Italian intelligence landscape leading up to the Second World War. SIM was originally solely a "military intelligence and counterintelligence service" but within a decade of its foundation it transfigured into "a modern comprehensive structure capable of offering full intelligence coverage on domestic and overseas issues" (Williams 882). This is where part of the competition with OVRA can be observed. OVRA was "established as a (secret) political police" and as such was implemented for domestic surveillance and thwarting domestic subversion (Williams 887). SIM and OVRA now had overlapping and competing domestic jurisdiction. Furthermore, as SIM gained power thanks to "efforts to reform the service and improve its functioning," Mussolini became concerned that "any centralization of the Italian intelligence and counterintelligence agencies under a unified command structure would provide the new chief with unrivaled powers thus challenging his own authority" (Williams 882). While purposely limiting the power of SIM, the OVRA, "officially under the control of the General Directorate of Public Security," acted unofficially and "independently" following directives personally imparted by the Head of the Fascist government," Mussolini himself (Williams 887). Mussolini was blatantly favoring OVRA over his other intelligence agencies and organizations so much so that OVRA became "a vast espionage organization" with "members work(ing) under diplomatic cover in embassies and consulates" that were also "not accountable to senior diplomatic staff" (Williams 886-887). It was clear that OVRA was now encroaching on SIM's originally established foreign jurisdiction. With two separate clashing areas of responsibility, favoritism from leadership, and

"internal priorities and interservice rivalries often determin(ing) their approach to intelligence received," the Italian intelligence apparatus was fatally weakened well before the Second World War would begin (Williams 883). A stunning example of Mussolini's distrust of SIM, which yielded weakness of the entire apparatus, was the fact that "the chief of SIM" was "completely unaware of Mussolini's intention to enter the war and learn(ed) of Italy's attack on France on 10 June 1940 through public announcements, like any ordinary Italian" (Williams 883). Foreign competition during the interwar period would also contribute to the relative weakness of Italian intelligence, first and foremost was the competition between Italy and England triggered in the Middle East.

Italy, with its annexation of Libya in the Italo-Turkish war, its possession of parts of Somalia and Eritrea, and its conquest of Ethiopia in the mid-1930s, was on a collision course with the main colonial power in the Middle Eastern and North African region, England. The first "collision" would begin with Mussolini's friendship of a Syrian, anti-French, and anti-British journalist, Emir Shakib Arslan. An opportunistic man, Arslan, who first disparaged Mussolini for Italy's brutal colonization and successive smothering of Libya and its people, and later in 1933 found himself in need of "valuable political and financial support" for his paper (Williams 894). Through his friendship with Mussolini, Arslan would gain "a solid political backing to his campaign against the British and French presence in the Middle East" (Williams 894). While Mussolini was actively "winning the favour and allegiance of prominent Arab nationalists," like Arslan, the British paid "scant attention to the challenge and threat brought by Arab nationalism to the security" of their colonial empire (Williams 895). This was a result of the "fragmented structure of Britain's counter-espionage service,

its inadequate funding and lack of "directive" which further "hindered Britain's efforts to obtain reliable intelligence about Axis activities, plans and capability in the Middle East" (Williams 896). It would take the British a handful of years to "begin gathering information on their Italian counterparts," but "not much progress" would be made by the start of the Second World War (Williams 897). The British intelligence apparatus was more concerned with "German military capability and policy in Europe," only paying attention to the Fascist secret services after they invaded Abyssinia in 1935 (Williams 897). Following its own investigation of the Italian secret services, Britain "disregard(ed) the possibility of a considerable threat posed by Italian activities on the mainland and in the Middle East" (Williams 898). The Italian secret services succeeded in the Middle East/North Africa not because of their own merits, but because of the lack thereof within their English counterparts and the internal support from anti-French and anti-British movements. These successes of Italy in the region would be "short-lived" regardless of the 'intense work of the various Fascist intelligence agencies," because Mussolini's "imperialistic ambitions soon became evident" alienating his support from within the region and "generat(ing) enough suspicion and interest" in both London and Paris: these factors contributed to Allied cryptanalytic engagement against the Italians (Williams 901).

Cryptanalysis is the field responsible for attempting to break enemy ciphers and codes to observe critical communications regarding military action. Cryptanalysis would be a shortcoming of the Fascist intelligence apparatus and deliver an edge to the Allies. In its inter-war growth, the SIM would gain cryptanalysis under its umbrella of responsibilities. The division of SIM tasked with cryptanalysis was "Sezione 5 (Section 5) whose" objective "was to solve and read diplomatic and military" coded

messages or “cryptograms” (Williams 888). Section 5 would not be able to accomplish their mission without “Sezione 6 (Section 6)” which was “the intercept unit” and secondarily “produced codes and ciphers for the Italian Army” (Williams 888). Perhaps, the integration of Sections 5 and 6 would have been beneficial as both sections were dependent on each other to carry out their respective responsibilities. Either way, France’s “counterintelligence” was able to “routinely observe the activities of the Italian special police” in both “Europe and North Africa” (Williams 884). The French were then able to uncover that all “OVRA agents received comprehensive training in Rome, at the School of Foreign Languages” and came from “a number of professions-journalists, tradesmen, doctors, posters, waiters, and clerks” (Williams 884). OVRA’s uncovering would not be the fault of Section 5 and 6 of the SIM, because due to the historic fragmentation and inter-agency competition that has been discussed, each service was likely responsible for its own operational and communication security. Conversely, around the time of OVRA’s uncovering, SIM would ascertain that not only had “it succeeded in breaking most British ciphers and codes that” were in use between 1938 and 1942 but that it “further complicated the work of British codebreakers” (Williams 888). The naval section of intelligence under SIM accomplished this by “constantly” revising codes and “equip(ping) each vessel and submarine” with “individual code tables” which would be “destroyed before falling into the hands of the enemy” (Williams 888). These successes however were undermined by the exception that “the British could learn to read the Italian system through the telegrams they had intercepted and studied” and that once the “British navy had identified the wavelength of Italian transmissions they could *exactly* locate the position of Italian vessels and submarines” (Williams 888). The lack of a

centralized cryptography intelligence structure would greatly undermine the success of the intelligence apparatus. The SIM, OVRA, and Army all having their own interception and decoding sections, could hamper coordinated action on intercepted enemy communications, would open more avenues for interception of their own communications when intelligence had to be shared between the organizations, and would limit coordination on securing their own codes. It was for this last reason that "the British were reading the high-grade cyphers" of all of the branches of the Italian military: "Army, Navy and Air Force" (Hinsley 1). Acting on both Italian and German intercepted codes, provided by "Italian machine decrypts" and "Enigma decrypts," the "British were sinking 60 percent of the Axis shipping that plied between the European Mediterranean ports and North Africa" (Hinsley 3). Throughout this period the Allies as a whole were "reading" between 3,000 and 4,000 "German signals a day and a large, but somewhat smaller, volume of Italian and Japanese traffic" where to the Axis powers "virtually all the Allied cyphers had by then been made invulnerable" (Hinsley 1). The British and Allies advantage over the Italians and the remainder of the Axis powers in cryptography and cryptanalysis was no more evident than at the battle of Cape Matapan in 1941. The British Royal Navy with assistance from the Australian Navy "intercepted the Italian Fleet" and decimated it through not only the use of cryptography but Signals Intelligence or SIGINT, which is the interception of electronic communications for use in intelligence matters (Hinsley 4). The British sustained less than ten total casualties where the Italians sustained multiple thousands. In contrast to their naval successes, the British were struggling to gain any success in intelligence land-based operations through the Special Operation Executive or SOE as a result of one of the few successes of the Fascist Italian intelligence apparatus. The

Special Operations Executive (SOE) had been created in 1940 and would begin its operations in Italy within July of that same year. It was in the spring of this year that Churchill would praise Mussolini for his quelling of "a Communist seizure of power" during the interwar period in order to persuade Mussolini to "enter the war so the British and French could negotiate [...] not only with Hitler but also with the Duce who would have the task of reducing the demands of his Axis partner to a bearable size" in the assumption that the Allies would lose the war, based partly on intelligence assessments pertaining to Germany's military capabilities (Woller and Liermann 615)[18]. Churchill would attempt to appeal to Mussolini in a secret letter correspondence that would go unreplied: "Is it too late to stop a river of blood flowing between the British and Italian peoples? There is no doubt that we can both inflict grave harm on each other and massacre each other severely and darken the Mediterranean with our struggle. If you so decide, it must be so; but I declare that I have never been an enemy of the Italian people, nor have I ever been in my heart the opponent of the one who gives the laws to Italy. [...] Through all the ages [...] the cry reaches us that the common heirs of the Latin and Christian civilizations must not face each other in a mortal struggle. Hear it, I beseech you with all honor and respect, before the dreadful signal is given. It will never be given by us" (Churchill in Woller and Liermann 639)[19]. The letter, without a reply from Mussolini, would leave

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[18] "entrare in guerra affinché britannici e francesi potessero trattare [...] non solo con Hitler ma anche con il Duce che avrebbe avuto il compito di ridurre le pretese del partner dell'Asse ad una dimensione sopportabile per la parte vinta"

[19] "È troppo tardi per impedire che scorra un fiume di sangue tra i popoli britannico e italiano? Non v'è dubbio che entrambi possiamo reciprocamente infliggerci gravi danni e massacrarci l'un l'altro duramente e oscurare il Mediterraneo con la nostra lotta. Se voi così decidete, bisogna che sia così; ma io dichiaro che non sono stato mai

Churchill with no choice: he would greenlight SOE operations on Italian soil only two months later.

Shortly after Italian operations began, the SOE would "soon realize how much more difficult it was to function in an enemy country" (Gilmour para. 3). There were a couple of reasons for this. First, it was a newly established security organization, plagued by the common issues that face a newly formed or established intelligence organization. Second, the SOE had a difficult time initially setting up an intelligence network, because before the partisan uprising, "plenty of Italians might dislike the Fascist regime but very few were prepared to betray their country, risk their lives, or kill their compatriots" (Gilmour para. 3). Additionally, the few Italians who were coerced to work with the SOE to reduce their prison sentences or those that volunteered "were almost invariably judged to be 'unsuitable' or 'unreliable'" (Gilmour para. 3). Third, the operations drafted by the SOE were often out of the ordinary and not realistic to accomplish. For example, there was a "plan to poison Mussolini and another one to assassinate Farinacci, one of Fascism's champion thugs" (Gilmour para. 4). The SOE recognized the impossibility of those two particular missions and scrapped them, but not before wasting brain and manpower on concocting them. Even when the SOE would launch an operation, they had a "distressingly low success rate" (Gilmour para. 5). There was an operation where an "Italian waiter at a London hotel was parachuted in to help blow up the Aquedotto

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nemico del popolo italiano, né mai sono stato nel mio cuore l'avversario di colui che dà le leggi all'Italia. [...] Attraverso tutte le epoche [...] ci giunge il grido che gli eredi comuni delle civiltà latina e cristiana non debbono affrontarsi l'un gli altri in una lotta mortale. Ascoltatelo, ve ne scongiuro con tutto l'onore e con tutto il rispetto, prima che lo spaventoso segnale sia dato. Esso non sarà mai dato da noi."

Pugliese but he was soon captured and executed," another mission where "two Italians are landed on Sicily's east coast where they were also quickly captured and shot, and a third raid where "two more agents were made prisoners as soon as they reached a beach in Sardinia, whereupon they were cleverly exploited by the Servizio Informazione Militare (SIM)" (Gilmour para. 5). The success of the SIM married the organizational shortcomings of the SOE, particularly in an operation that the SOE wrongly believed as yielding success. The operation in question surrounded a Scottish agent being dispatched to Switzerland, near the northwestern border of Italy, where "he sent large quantities of explosives" to people who were believed to be "his agents" (Gilmour para. 6). In return for the explosives, the Scottish agent would receive "gratifying reports of successful acts of sabotage carried out by a group of resistance fighters called the Tigrotti: ships sunk, trains derailed, and factories set alight" (Gilmour para. 6). None of this sabotage had actually occurred. This was because "his agents" actually "belong(ed) to SIM, the Tigrotti (did) not even exist: they (were) an amusing invention of the Italians who, whatever their deficiencies on the battlefield [...] had outsmarted their other counterparts in British Intelligence" (Gilmour para. 6). Regardless of this success, Gilmour acknowledges the failures of the SIM on the battlefield, where success is definitively more important. In fact, Cesare Amè, the "head of the Servizio Informazioni Militare" provides a bleak yet more accurate prognosis of the SIM upon entry into the war: "I do not believe that other belligerent nations witnessed the same chaos in such a delicate and jealousy-ridden sector. In practice, we entered the war with [...] intelligence services that lacked coordination and followed disparate directives and methods" (Williams 881). The four intelligence services Cesare Amè is alluding to are the SIM, OVRA, naval intelligence and air

force intelligence. He fails to mention the army's intelligence service, the SIE, and fails to recognize the integration of naval and air force intelligence as posited by Sistema informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica (para. 14). Potentially, Cesare Amè is claiming that although the Navy and Air Force were unified in SIM's foundation, they may have maintained their independence contrary to what was supposed to occur. Although initially, "most of SOE's projects for Italy did not materialize and those that did were failures," they would gain more success toward the end of the war with collaboration and competition with the US Office of Strategic Services (OSS) over the Partigiani (Gilmour para. 8). Meanwhile, the SIM would continuously yield limited to no military success for the Italians and Axis. The first place where the US and British would collaborate in assisting an Italian security service came before the war. It was not a part of Mussolini's Fascist apparatus, although located geographically on the peninsula. It was a body that was not often considered political until the Allies imagined the value of working alongside an institution inside of an Axis country. The first place where the British and US would collaborate was the Vatican.

The importance of diplomacy with the Vatican, which had been recognized as a sovereign state by Mussolini with the 1929 Lateran agreements, would increase exponentially immediately preceding the Second World War. As an important diplomatic center, according to Alvarez (593), "the Vatican (was) considered an important center for intelligence" because convention "maintains that, as an international institution with adherents and representatives around the world, the Papacy (had) access to a range of information unmatched" in both "quality and quantity by any other institution or state." It was this "reputation" that "was especially

strong" and important "during the Second World War" where "belligerent and neutral nations" alike "believed Vatican City to be an important listening post" (Alvarez 593). As such, "five different intelligence agencies from Germany alone worked against the Vatican" (Alvarez 593). As for the Allies, "the American embassy in Rome asserted that 'the resumption of diplomatic relations with the Vatican would be a new source of political information of the highest importance'" (Alvarez 593). Moreover, the Vatican also became "a special target of the Italian services" with "the papal police" being easily penetrated by agents of the Italian security services" (Alvarez 599). The Italian secret services "monitored events and personalities in the Vatican, paying special attention to the activities of Allied diplomats living inside the papal territory" and they screened the Vatican's mail, rendering its communications as insecure (Alvarez 593, 599-600). The assumption that the Vatican would be a source of valuable intelligence on behalf of the secular powers, although well-founded in "popular wisdom," was misplaced for multiple reasons (Alvarez 593). First, despite the improvement "after the First World War when the Vatican began to professionalize its diplomatic service by adopting many of the administrative practices and personnel policies common to the services of secular powers," the Papacy's "code of conduct" "confined" the priests to "the local diplomatic community, the Catholic hierarchy, and the high officials of the host government" (Alvarez 595). Contact with local citizenry was unusual, especially in regard to "representatives of business or the military" (Alvarez 595). When the Vatican did possess intelligence of political and military importance it was almost exclusively "from tiny states (San Marino, Monaco) or lesser powers (Chile, Cuba, Guatemala) which were on the periphery of military and political events" thus limiting the intelligence's "utility" (Alvarez 596). Therefore,

whatever information or intelligence that the Vatican could gather, it was hardly ever complete or useful. Secondarily, the Vatican did not possess a “specialized unit for the systematic collation and analysis of raw information” and Nuncios, the Church equivalent to ambassadors, “were expected to report, not to analyze or predict” (Alvarez 595-596). The Vatican would be unable to convert raw information or gathered intelligence into a cohesive, insightful, presentable, and/or actionable report. Naturally, there were a few exceptions. For example, the “nunciature in Bucharest reported early evidence of the Final Solution” (Alvarez 596). Third, the Papacy's diplomatic service “was seriously understaffed” by the onset of the war, the entire diplomatic staff had thirty-one members, approximately half of which were “archivists or clerks” (Alvarez 594). The Vatican did not possess the manpower necessary to house all of the functions of an efficient intelligence organization. Fourth, the Papacy, much like the SOE with the Italians at the beginning of the war, had the impossible task of setting up an information or intelligence gathering network. The underlying cause of the inability to establish an intelligence network was that Catholics “generally accept(ed) the authority of the Pope in matters of faith and morals” but “had little or no sense of political allegiance to the Papacy” (Alvarez 598). For example, “they thought of themselves as German Catholics or Belgian Catholics, with the emphasis as much on the national as on the religious identity” (Alvarez 598). A microcosm of this phenomenon was “during World War II, the White House turned to Francis Cardinal Spellman [...] for help in providing information and making contacts, because ‘as a ranking churchman, he could visit the Vatican frequently and possibly enter nations where American diplomats could not’” (Gvosdev 806). In doing so, Cardinal Spellman as a “confidant and advisor to the pope [...] had access to a great deal of sensitive

information [...] on various international events and crises" which would then be "shared by the cardinal with US diplomatic and intelligence officials" (Gvosdev 806). Cardinal Spellman would be the only real source of information for the Americans inside of the Vatican during the Second World War. This highlights the fifth problem inherent in the Vatican's "intelligence" structure. The problem was that the Vatican's "modest internal security and surveillance" capability would almost entirely be consumed by watching Allied diplomats, who "when Italy entered the war in May 1940 [...] were forced to vacate their missions in the city of Rome and move into Vatican City [...] where they were virtual prisoners [...] prohibited [...] from leaving Vatican territory, sending coded cables, and using their diplomatic pouch" (Alvarez 596). Although information was hard to obtain and distribute from within the Vatican on behalf of the Allies, in particular England and the US, the Vatican was no ally to the Axis either. The Vatican allocated its "assets" to the "banks and vaults of the democracies (Allies) [...] in the early years of the war when it seemed certain, as they themselves believed, that Germany would win, and Hitler (would) establish himself as master of Europe" (McGoldrick 1034). Therefore, Vatican intelligence did not provide a decisive advantage to either side of the conflict. In fact, Alvarez (605) summarizes the Papacy's intelligence capacity best when he ascertains that "the wartime intelligence capabilities of the Papacy have been exaggerated [...] or misperceived": The Holy See "was usually no more informed about events than many secular powers; often it was less informed." Regardless of the exaggeration of the historical importance or efficacy of Vatican intelligence during the Second World War, the Papacy's informal intelligence structure maintains a two-fold significance. First, as it was under constant Fascist surveillance, it would stretch the Fascist intelligence

service by having it expend resources and manpower. Second, although the Papacy was found to not have a strong, formal, or important intelligence structure it would foreshadow the possibility of a separate intelligence service or armed resistance movement existing under Mussolini and Fascism. This intelligence-facilitated resistance movement was a capable domestic force that would ultimately join the fight against the Axis, manifest itself as the Partigiani or Partisan resistance fighters, and win the subsequent Italian civil war.

The Partisans, although an informal organization, were not only supremely successful in combat but in intelligence practice as well. Much of what the partisans learned came directly from large, Allied powers who had formalized and effective intelligence structures. Competition over assisting the Partisans would arise between the US' OSS and England's SOE. This competition, however, did not prevent or derail an Allied and Partisan victory, it was largely about influence that would extend after the conclusion of the war. Peter Tompkins (71), a wartime spy in Rome for the American OSS, attributes the "partisans' success" to the "arms and supplies parachuted to them by the British Special Operations Executive and the OSS and to the brilliance of the intelligence networks developed by members of the Resistance in constant touch with Fifteenth (US) Army Group headquarters via secret radios." He ascertains that "little credit has been given to the vast amount of detailed intelligence collected and rapidly transmitted by individual partisans in Italy" (Tompkins 71). The Partisans were successful for many reasons. First, the Partisans had individuals or individual units that were uniquely talented and therefore successful. Second, they were not hamstrung by competing organizational responsibilities or by a leader who was fearful of anyone challenging his mandate to rule. Third, even when the OSS and

SOE competed over assisting the Partisans, it often yielded more supplies for the Partisans, not less. Fourth, the Partisans were united by a single cause of defeating the Fascists and expelling the Nazis from their country. Fifth, with the example set not by their own government's intelligence apparatus but the more well-versed English and American counterparts, the Partisans had better operational planning, maneuvering, financing, and technology. They were also able to distinguish themselves from their Allied counterparts by possessing the unique ability to infiltrate places that both the SOE and OSS could not because of their knowledge of the terrain, language, and culture. Multiple operations would be drafted with this idea in mind. For example, the OSS would "infiltrate individual partisan agents by submarine behind the German lines" in Northern Italy (Tompkins 71). Once a partisan was behind enemy lines, he or she was then able to gather "extremely accurate information," "organize parachute drops of weapons," "attack the Germans," and/or set up "an intelligence network" (Tompkins 71, 74). A young agent, Mino Farneti, was able to accomplish all four. He "pinpoint(ed)" places in the Apennine mountains for weapon and supply drops to "enable growing groups of partisans to attack the Germans," he "set up a secret radio in the foothills" of those very same mountains, and it was "his men" who "intercepted and shot a German major traveling by sidecar" who possessed "a complete set of plans for the eastern half of the Gothic Line defenses" (Tompkins 71). He then utilized his intelligence network to "get the plans for the Allies" by sending an agent "to Milan where they were forwarded by courier to Allen Dulles, head of the OSS in Switzerland" who would become the first civilian director of the CIA (Tompkins 71). Elsewhere, another partisan operation under Ennio Tassinari, produced "a complementary set of plans for the western half of the Gothic line" (Tompkins 71).

Tassinari then smuggled the plans to the OSS in Siena, in the soles of his shoes (Tompkins 71). The intelligence that both of these plans provided was that "the weakest spot" in the German defenses was at "Il Giogo Pass" (Tompkins 71-72). This intelligence would be acted upon by US General Clark, who would "shift the main attack of his II corps eastward" to Il Giogo Pass (Tompkins 72). Hence, on September 17, 1944 the "II Corps broke through the Gothic Line, causing the whole German" defensive to "fallback" (Tompkins 72). Away from the Gothic Line, Partisans successes were continuing in Ravenna, Turin, Genoa, Venice, and Milan.

In Ravenna, Mino Farneti, equipped with "two radios, a new operator, and a large consignment of weapons for the 28th Garibaldi brigade" that was led by an agent with the codename of "Bulow," organized a "surprise attack [...] from the rear of Ravenna" (Tompkins 73). Simultaneously, an "Allied attack from the south [...] (and) from the east" would force the Germans on a single "route of escape" that would be targeted by armed "townspeople led by clandestine action groups in neighboring cities" (Tompkins 73). By 5:30 in the morning on the day of the attack, the Partisans "took the enemy by surprise [...] (with) many [...] surrender(ing) after finding themselves surrounded" (Tompkins 74). By 4:30 that afternoon, the OSS transmitted a message: "British in Ravenna. Regards to all" (Tompkins 74). The city had been retaken on the merits of partisan intelligence practice and operational planning.

In Turin, a partisan operative team, led by Marcello de Leva and Riccardo Vanzetti, succeeded in "creating an intelligence network," setting up a communications radio "in a flourishing beehive" from which "the radio operator transmitted safely until the end of the war" (Tompkins 74). Moreover, they trained teams of saboteurs to disrupt German communications," and designed "a novel system

of partisan warfare based on mobile units in the flatland, equipped first with bicycles, then with cars, then with trucks, and finally, with tanks, all captured from the enemy" (Tompkins 74). The intelligence network in Turin mobilized "civilians and workers" to the partisan cause culminating in an attack on the Germans in conjunction with "Vanzetti's mobile forces, armed with captured German tanks" which liberated Turin and forced the Germans to "withdraw to the nearby hills, waiting to surrender to the Allies" (Tompkins 76).

In Genoa, partisans "collect(ed) intelligence" to share with the French Committee of National Liberation (CNL), "select(ed) pinpoints for parachute drops to arm the groups of partisans organizing in the Ligurian hills surrounding Genoa," and enrolled loyal citizenry into "clandestine action squads [...] armed with weapons seized from Fascist forces" to fight the Axis (Tompkins 74-75). These mostly civilian action squads "mushroomed from 5,000 to 20,000 men and women, young and old" (Tompkins 75). The increase in enrollment allowed for more missions to be accomplished. The action squads "blew up enough power lines to paralyze electric-train transport from Liguria toward Piedmont," "removed essential parts" from German steam engines, overran the Germans in battle, and captured the city's radio station to inform the world that the city was in the CNL's hands" (Tompkins 75).
In Venice, the Partisans in conjunction with the French CNL, surrounded the city, to which the "German command in Venice issued an ultimatum [...] threatening to destroy the city's key installations unless the Partisans agreed to allow withdrawal of the German garrison of 2,300 troops plus 1,800 Fascists" (Tompkins 76). The Venetian Partisans by then armed by "23 successful parachute drops" rebutted the ultimatum by "threat(ening) the Germans and the Fascists with annihilation by 4,500

partisans massed in the area, unless they rescinded their plans for destruction" (Tompkins 77). The Axis, recognizing their fate, "surrendered the city (Venice) and port intact" (Tompkins 77).

Finally, in Milan, team leader Enzo Boeri, was successful in "transmitting a huge volume of intelligence, receiving instructions, and relaying messages to partisan units in the mountains" (Tompkins 77). It was these types of accomplishments that had returned "all the great cities" to "Allied hands" and would yield the largest partisan success in Milan (Tompkins 76). When the partisans ultimately "entrapped" the Axis forces in Milan, Mussolini, "along with his top henchmen" were present in an attempt "to negotiate some sort of deal" but when Mussolini received notice that "only unconditional surrender was acceptable" he attempted to escape the city with his girlfriend in a "strong German convoy of 30 SS trucks protected by armored cars" (Tompkins 77). A partisan division, led by Vincenzo Moscatelli, had set up a roadblock just north of Milan in a town called Dongo where Mussolini would ultimately be "discovered and executed with his girlfriend (Claretta Patacci) on unanimous orders from Partisan high command" (Tompkins 77). The Partisans, a melting pot of men and women of all ages and backgrounds, with the assistance of the western powers, were able to accomplish what the Fascist intelligence apparatus was designed specifically to prevent. As efficient as the Partisan "organized vast intelligence service" was, it would be challenged by the internal fragmentation of the ideologies present within its ranks and the external influence foreshadowed by US and English competition over the Partisans, after the war's conclusion (Tompkins 77).

The American OSS was junior in experience relative to its British counterpart, the SOE, during the Italian Allied campaign in World War II. However, the OSS wanted

to challenge its status against its British counterpart and "establish itself as an independent agency" (Piffer 42). It would attempt to accomplish this in a variety of ways, with lasting consequences well beyond war's end. The relationship between the two organizations began in June of 1942, when "an agreement" was "signed [...] that established geographic spheres of responsibility for each agency" (Piffer 43). The SOE was granted responsibility over "most of Europe, including the Balkans" whereas the OSS "took primary responsibility for China, the Pacific, and North Africa" (Piffer 43). However, both agencies "claimed the right to act independently" in both Germany and Italy (Piffer 43). Italy, as an area of overlapping responsibility for both organizations, would see "British efforts to keep OSS under its control whenever possible" and "U.S. attempts to expand OSS' area of influence over its counterpart" (Piffer 44). By the beginning of the following year, 1943, William "Wild Bill" Donovan, the director of the OSS, would purposely encroach on and clash with the British over their territory in the Balkans. Donovan and the OSS would do this by "establish(ing) an independent OSS base in Cairo" which would launch "OSS personnel to the Balkans" and by seeking to "alter [...] policy" set forth by the British who "switched their support in Yugoslavia [...] to Josip Broz Tito, head of the Communist partisan movement" (Piffer 44). This was a precedent that would not only carry over to Italy during World War II but last well beyond the war as Italy began to present Communist sympathies following the war. Immediately after SOE's failures at the beginning of the Italian campaign, both agencies produced the assessment that "neither Britain nor the United States had expected a strong resistance movement to emerge in Italy because Italians had generally shown little inclination to engage in armed resistance" (Piffer 48). When the Italian partisans, contrary to British and

American belief, began to rise against their Fascist counterparts, the British proposed to create an Allied Italian special operations "organization" called the "SOM: Special Operation in the Mediterranean" (Piffer 46). This proposal attempted to consolidate the SOE and the OSS into one special operations body in Italy but would never reach completion. The proposition would fail to materialize as a result of "strong anti-British feelings" that were commonplace "in the OSS Italian section" (Piffer 46). The strong anti-British sympathies were derived from the OSS' "desire for independence" (Piffer 46). Further resistance to integration was that any attempt to unify the two agencies would shield or "prevent the partisans from knowing 'that they (were) receiving support and encouragement from the United States as a country" (Piffer 49). Lastly, the OSS "vigorously protested" British claim to providing the Partisans with "two-thirds of the monthly supplies" (Piffer 51). As such, both the OSS and SOE "managed a completely independent network of agents without coordination," had no capacity to "cross-check the information" or intelligence received and possessed a "lack of a clear chain of command" (Piffer 49). The results of this lack of integration would have two consequences. The first would put the agents at greater risk due to the "toll on military effectiveness" (Piffer 58). An example of this was a mission in March of 1945 where "an OSS detachment sent three Partisans over the lines to report on the front without warning the SOE mission operating in the area": this decision of the OSS caused the SOE to "immediately arrest" these "enemy spies" with the OSS agents "nearly shot" (Piffer 54). The second consequence would be that the OSS took advantage of this arrangement to "eclipse and overtake the SOE" with the aim "to let the Italians know that the United States was doing more than the British to help them" (Piffer 52). The OSS would accomplish this by "obtaining their own packing stations

and airfields to bypass the British channel" in turn, offering the OSS the ability to "ship large quantities of materiel with no regard for either SOE policy or the efficacy of transferring so many weapons to the Partisans" (Piffer 55). Ultimately, the "Allies shipped more than 6,000 tons of materiel to the Partisans during the war" with the lion's share coming from the Americans. The OSS, which after the war would be chartered as a permanent US government organization by President Truman under the name of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), would return to collect the dividends of their wartime favors from the newly created Republic of Italy, established by referendum on June 2nd, 1946.

The Americans would not only overcome the British special services and gain intelligence independence during the war. The Americans would overtake the British in their attempts to suppress Communist sympathies and a potential Communist seizure of power. Much like Churchill praised Mussolini for his opposition to a Communist uprising, the Americans would allegedly covertly support anti-Communist forces, organizations, and individuals. Simultaneously, the newly formed Italian government on behalf of the Partisans would begin to ideologically fracture. The Republic of Italy, with its founding members across the political ideological spectrum previously unified against Fascism, turned its political differences against itself. The fragmented government of Italy, its geographical position between Communist Eastern Europe and the West, would make the country a breeding ground for terrorism in what would become known as the *anni di piombo* or the Years of Lead.

Chapter 4

THE YEARS OF LEAD: ALLEGED DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN COMPLICITY IN TERRORISM

The Italian Republic, born of the Italian civil war, was founded in 1946. In 1948, two years after the new government's foundation, the country would have its first election. An election that would be marred by alleged American interference through multiple avenues. The permissiveness of the Italian intelligence apparatus to let a foreign power decide its first elections is indicative of either the fact that Italy was too weak to combat any foreign threat, especially from one of the well-funded victors of the Second World War, or the country was complicit in guiding the electoral outcome. The Americans were not the only foreign power operating on the peninsula. In fact, recent evidence suggests that the Soviet Union, and later Russia, framed the CIA as the perpetrator of many of the terrorist attacks during the Years of Lead to conceal its own involvement. Either way the competing ideologies between the US and Soviet Union, were emblematic of the competing ideologies present on the peninsula. The ideologies clashed increasingly violently from 1969 until the 1980s. This chapter will chronicle the events of the new Republic and the Years of Lead, from 1946 until the kidnapping of General Dozier in 1981 and outline Italian intelligence's function and potential responsibility through evidence that links terror organizations and their members to the intelligence services. The chapter also examines the reorganizations of the intelligence services in response to domestic terrorism and their lingering shortcomings and successive improvements.

Before the Republic of Italy was officially founded in 1948, the informal Badoglio government which opposed Mussolini and cooperated with both the Allies

and Partigiani, had an eye on the future with its "embryonic security reform" by forming the "Special Information Service (SIS)" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 15)[20]. The SIS commandeered "all the responsibilities [...] in the field of political investigation" from *Divisione affari generali e riservati* (DAGR), which was established in the 1919 intelligence reforms that are mentioned in Chapter 2 (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 15)[21]. The SIS had a short life span. It lasted until the end of the Italian civil war and the foundation of the Republic, a total of "about four years" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 15)[22]. The SIS was replaced by the *Ufficio Affari Riservati del Ministero dell'interno* or the Reserved Affairs Office of the Ministry of the Interior (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 15). The historical precedent set by the past Italian intelligence agencies and their shortcomings permit the conclusion that both the SIS and the Reserved Affairs Office of the Ministry of the Interior were supremely weakened. These pronounced deficiencies contributed to the overall susceptibility of the new government to intrusion in its elections and its governance. The first purported instance of intrusion was the Republic's first election in 1948.

The parliamentary elections of 1948 "pitted Rome's pro-Western government against a Communist-dominated Popular Front" which the "American embassy, the

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[20] "una prima embrionale riforma della sicurezza [...] Servizio Informazioni Speciali (SIS)"

[21] "tutte le competenze [...] in materia di investigazione politica"

[22] "circa quattro anni"

CIA, and other US organizations" would do anything to stop (Boghardt para. 1). The Americans allegedly attempted to achieve this through indirect assistance of the pro-Western government and its supporters, leaving themselves plausible deniability. The Americans provided pre-election "covert financial assistance" as well as made overt "public statements" that connected "economic aid to an electoral defeat of the Popular Front" (Boghardt para. 3). The US was also prepared for the chance of a Popular Front electoral victory. If the Popular Front had won the elections, the US would have facilitated "financial and military assistance to 'the anti-Communist Italian underground'" (Boghardt para. 5). More specifically, the communications uncovered at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland have confirmed this possibility. The unearthed communications between the commander of US Army Intelligence, Lieutenant General Stephen Chamberlin and the Army's delegate to Rome, Colonel John Willems, reveal that "Willems was to reach out to elements in the Italian military" and assumptively its respective intelligence structure, "who would be willing to counter a Communist government" (Boghardt para. 7). Colonel Willems tried to improve upon the plan originally formulated by LTG. Chamberlin, by not only including Italian military and intelligence but also "anti-Communist politicians" to "increase the chances of success" (Boghardt para. 8). Regardless of the potential plan, Willems established a "secret channel" between "several top Italian military officers, including the chief of staff, the chief of operations, and the chief of military intelligence" (Boghardt para. 9). It was through this secret channel that when the "Popular Front victory at the polls seemed unlikely," Italian military officials expressed their concerns about "a Communist uprising and the possibility of a Soviet or Yugoslav invasion of northern Italy in the wake of the election" (Boghardt para. 9).

The US and the Italian military never had to act on these plans because of the eventual Communist loss at the polls, the lack of "an insurrection," or Soviet or Yugoslav "invasion" (Boghardt para. 10). However, this episode demonstrates the concern that Italian Communism was generating within the US and its foreign policy. It was a precedent that questionable sources would later use to ascertain that US interference prior to the election yielded the Popular Front's loss as well as to accuse the US of complicity in Italy's successive decades of terrorism.

The US was initially accused of displaying concern regarding Communism somewhere "between late 1943 and mid 1944" (McCoy para. 10). America began to act on these worries "in mid-1944" by "cut(ting) back its arms drops to the Resistance" (McCoy para. 10). The US believed that the rise of Communism was analogous to the "situation" that "provoked the March on Rome and gave birth to Fascism" regardless of being on the opposite side of the political spectrum (McCoy para. 10). According to McCoy, the US, fearful of the rise of another polarizing political ideology may have acted too hastily to prevent a third intercontinental conflict. The Italian public perceived the CIA's and US' need to act promptly and decisively against Communism as a means to later accuse the CIA and US for other illegal actions in the name of preventing a Communist uprising. For example, McCoy, (para. 11) states that American "occupation authorities used Mafia officials" in order to allegedly "combat expected Communist gains" because "any changes in the island's (Sicily's) feudal social structure would cost the Mafia money and power" making the *La Cosa Nostra* "a natural anti-Communist ally." One important *mafioso* and a second mafia-contracted mercenary or bandit emerged in quelling anti-Communist uprisings. Don Calogero, set the precedent for the second man to follow. In September of 1944,

Don Calogero's men attended a "leftist political rally" headed by "Communist leader Girolamo Li Causi [...] (and) fired into the crowd […] wound(ing) nineteen spectators" in an effort to disband this particular rally and prevent any others from occurring in the future through intimidation (McCoy para. 14). The second man was Salvatore Giuliano, a bandit hired by the mafia, who was also a confidant, advisor, and driver for Don Calgero's close and "old friend" Vito Genovese (McCoy para. 13). Considering Giuliano's status as advisor to Vito Genovese, it can be inferred that Giuliano had infrequent contact with Don Calogero. The importance of this relationship would reach a vertex with the *Portella della ginestra* massacre.

In May of 1947, with the precedent set by Calogero's shootout in 1944, "Salvatore Giuliano and his gang [...] kill(ed) eight people and wound(ed) thirty-three" others in "a Sicilian village that had voted for the Communist's party candidates in elections four days before" (Valentine p. 76). A separate mafioso, Frank Coppola of Partinico, "reportedly provided Giuliano with the bombs and guns" and was "allegedly financed by former OSS chief William Donovan" (Valentine p. 76). Similar charges were produced by Communist party leader Palmiro Togliatti against the "reporter Michael Stern (who had glorified Giuliano in a series of articles for *True Magazine* in 1947)" for allegedly being "a spy for William Donovan" (Valentine p. 76). Daniele Ganser (222) (259), a controversial Swiss "historian" and author, who has published anti-American research on NATO following the Second World War, while ignoring the policies and practices of the Soviet Union during the same time period, levels charges that the "CIA [...] decided that Italy was not ready to have free and fair elections" and hence "rigged the elections" and "successfully manipulated the outcome [...] so in the Italian parliament "the majority [...] would go to the CIA-

supported DC [...] while the Communist-Socialist coalition would be weakened through a smear campaign." Andrew Palermo, a journalist for The Independent, lays blame not with the Americans but rather with the Christian Democrats. He claims that "the Christian Democrat establishment" made an "unholy alliance with the world of organized crime" when the "peasants [...] were mown down by machine-gunners determined to deter them once and for all from voting for the Communists" (Palermo para. 1). The Portella della Ginestra Massacre, "shocked the Sicilian peasantry back into the arms of the establishment, an establishment in which the interests of the big landowners, the Christian Democrats, the Church, and the Mafia converged" (Palermo para. 3). Palermo (para. 4) does concede, unlike Togliatti and Ganser, that "the exact chain of responsibility has never been established." Del Pero (1316), an international historical researcher with a specific focus on US international intervention during the Cold War, contends that all these claims of American interference are mere speculation by stating that "the political use of OSPS (offshore military procurements) [...] was the most manifest form of American interference in Italian domestic affairs." Essentially, the Americans only provided financial assistance to non-Communist politicians, they did not manufacture ballots or provide support to military action against Communists. Ironically, the financial support came with an unintended consequence. In fact, Del Pero (1326) cites the American ambassador as declaring that "anti-Communism" was "Italy's most profitable business," and "in order to stay in this business, the DC had 'to keep the Commies in it' because Communist strength represented an 'indirect source of U.S. dollars.'" The US Ambassador, Clare Booth Luce, "urge(d) the end of covert aid to the Italian government because [...] 'the very maintenance of the Communist threat"' was the only mean in which anti-Communist

politicians could receive “goodly sums of money” without “public accounting’” through those same OSPS (Del Pero 1326). Umberto Santino, a researcher and journalist for *La Repubblica*, summarizes the accusations of American involvement in the 1947 massacre and the 1948 elections best that “it cannot be assumed that the bandit (Giuliano) was led by the Americans” and that “the United States and the Cold War certainly weighed on these choices but more than an external imposition, we can speak of consensual marriage between local, national, and international interests” (Santino para. 3-4)[23]. Vague evidence and blind accusations connect both the US and the Christian Democrats to the Portella Della Ginestra massacre. Even if these accusations were true, or if the Mafia operated on its own agenda, “the fortunes [...] depend(ed) largely on the complicity, or at least the weakness, of the state structure” (Palermo para. 7). In summary, the Italian intelligence structure could not prevent these crimes of political violence, signifying a massive failure and underlining the vulnerability of itself and the Republic at large. Immediately following the massacre and contested elections in 1948, the intelligence apparatus would begin its next restructurings.

The first intelligence reorganization of the Republic arrived in the Spring of 1949, under the newly unified Ministry of Defense, that brought “together the Ministries of War, Navy, and Air Force [...] with the establishment of a single Armed Forces Information Service (SIFAR) that reported to the Chief of Defense Staff

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[23] “Non si può pensare che il bandito fosse guidato dagli americani [...] su queste scelte hanno certamente pesato gli Stati Uniti e la guerra fredda, ma più che di un'imposizione dall'esterno si può parlare di matrimonio consensuale tra interessi locali, nazionali e internazionali”

(Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 16)[24]. On top of the creation of SIFAR, each military organization gained "an Operational and Situation Information Section (SIOS)" that would report to its "respective Chief of Staff" with "technical-military information" that had been collected (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 17)[25]. This information would subsequently be relayed to SIFAR for analysis and dissemination to higher authorities, if deemed urgent. The hierarchical structure this created yielded Italy's first centralized security and intelligence service. Even Italy's current intelligence agency deems this to be true. According to Il sistema informazioni per la sicurezza della repubblica (Information system for the security of the Republic) (para. 18)[26], Italy's present-day intelligence service, SIFAR marked "the creation of a real secret service" thus labeling all its predecessors as inefficacious, illegitimate, or both. Although claiming that SIFAR represented Italy's first true intelligence structure, *Il Sistema informazioni per la sicurezza della Repubblica* (para. 18) posits that it still possessed its own unique shortcomings. These weaknesses were that SIFAR had "limited sovereignty" and that it was "in direct contact with the US services" (Il Sistema informazioni per la sicurezza della Repubblica para. 18)[27]. Essentially, the Italian intelligence apparatus was restrained in its responsibilities and shaped itself into the mold demonstrated and

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[24] "confluiscono i Ministeri della guerra, della marina e dell'aeronautica [...] con la costituzione di un unico Servizio Informazioni Forze Armate (SIFAR)"

[25] "Sezione informazioni operative e situazione (SIOS) [...] rispettivi Capi di Stato Maggiore [...] informazione tecnico-militare"

[26] "la creazione di un vero e proprio servizio segreto"

[27] "sovranità limitata e in diretto contatto con i servizi statunitensi"

set forth by the US both structurally and operationally. Regardless of these weaknesses, SIFAR was able to somewhat preserve a stable "Italian political situation" and helped enter Italy "into NATO" (Sistema informazioni per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 18)[28]. This political stability would not be long-lived nor would SIFAR itself. SIFAR was replaced in 1965, the year after the Piano Solo coup attempt in 1964.

The Piano Solo coup or the De Lorenzo coup was a "planned rightist coup masterminded by the head of the country's (Italy) paramilitary police force (Associated Press para. 1). The plot envisaged the "arrest of hundreds of leftist politicians, the seizure of Communist Party headquarters, and the takeover of leftist newspaper offices" (Associated Press para. 2). General Giovanni De Lorenzo, in which the coup was named, was the Chief of the Carabinieri and wanted to prevent the formation of a center-left coalition government. He envisioned the ability of the Carabinieri to stage the coup without the involvement of any other government or military forces. It is unclear, if the plot had been implemented, whether other government organizations would stand in support or opposition of the coup. Luckily, the plan was never executed.

A year later, in 1965, SIFAR was "transformed [...] into the Defense Information Service (SID) which was entrusted with the tasks of information, prevention and protection of military secrecy and of any other activity of national interest aimed at the security and defense of the country" (Sistema di informazione per

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[28] "situazione politica italiana [...] nella NATO"

la sicurezza della repubblica para. 19)[29]. The SID, much like SIFAR, was under military command in the Ministry of Defense. There was a second intelligence agency under the Ministry of the Interior at the time of the SID's creation and the beginning of *gli anni di piombo,* the Office of Classified Affairs. The leader of the Office of Classified Affairs, Federico Umberto D'Amato, "was a close collaborator of the American OSS (the precursor of the CIA) and of James Jesus Angleton who [...] was in charge of a Special Counterintelligence Unit" (Cento Bull 46). Cento Bull is arguing that even after the reorganization of SIFAR to SID, there remained close ties between Italian intelligence and US intelligence albeit through a separate office. She uses this personal connection to accuse US intelligence of informally swaying its Italian counterparts before and during the Years of Lead. Equally important are the organizational philosophies of SID immediately prior to the Years of Lead. The first philosophy "was: "markedly right wing, if not nostalgic [...] of the Fascist regime" (Cento Bull 47). For example, General Vito Miceli, former chief of the Army's SIOS division and the first chief of SID, "was seriously involved in the (Borghese) conspiracy," a 1970 planned neo-Fascist coup (Cento Bull 47). Miceli "prevent(ed) the magistrates" from receiving "intelligence reports on the coup preparations from 1969 onwards" and was "a personal friend of many of the conspirators" (Cento Bull 47).

The second doctrine "aimed at strengthening the institutions of the state against the Communist threat without recourse to a putschist strategy and/or extreme-right, openly Fascist organizations" (Cento Bull 47). The Office of Classified Affairs

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[29] "Trasforma [...] in Servizio Informazioni Difesa (SID) cui vengono affidati compiti di informazione, prevenzione e tutela del segreto militare e di ogni altra attività di interesse nazionale volta alla sicurezza e alla difesa del Paese"

seemed to also align itself with the SID's first philosophy because in November of 1968, they contacted Delfo Zorzi, a known member of the Neo-Fascist organization *Ordine Nuovo*, "who had been briefly arrested for possession of arms and a small quantity of explosives [...] (and) convinced Zorzi of the need to stop fighting an isolated battle against the Communist threat, which would only land him in jail, and to work instead for a state apparatus which pursued similar aims to those of Ordine Nuovo" (Cento Bull 58). Ordine Nuovo was also the organization behind the first major attack of the years of lead: The Piazza Fontana Massacre or bombing.

On December 12th, 1969, a bomb was detonated outside of Milan's *Banca nazionale dell'agricoltura*. The explosion killed 17 and maimed another 88 civilians. When "no organization claimed responsibility [...] widespread fear and paranoia" followed, which led to the arrests of 80 people "on the basis of flimsy evidence and public conjecture" (MacKay para. 1 and 3). These arrests did not yield any useful results, they did not prevent any future attacks, and they did not uncover those responsible for this specific attack. Contrarily, these detentions yielded the death of an innocent Anarchist and "railway worker named Giuseppe Pinelli" and the extra-judicial surveillance of a number of those wrongfully arrested "for years" following their release (MacKay para. 3). It took three years for the "far-right organization called Ordine Nuovo" to be investigated and even longer for its members to be brought to trial in "the late 80s" (MacKay para. 3). Two of its members, Giovanni Ventura and Franco Freda, "were sentenced for other, smaller, attacks but not for Piazza Fontana itself" (MacKay para. 3). It was not until 2001, 31 years after the attack, that a member of Ordine Nuovo was definitively linked to the bombing. The man's name was Carlo Digilio, and he was not only a member of the Ordine Nuovo but previously

"worked for the secret service(s)" (MacKay para. 4). The scale and precision of the attack precluded the possibility that Digilio operated alone. It was later uncovered that a masonic organization known as P2 (Pronounced: P Due) "actively disrupt(ed) the investigations into Ordine Nuovo (MacKay para. 4). Furthermore, a year prior to Digilio's confession, in 2000, the Italian government, under Romano Prodi, "declared officially that the CIA knew about the attack in advance and chose to withhold that information from the secret services" (MacKay para. 4). These claims mirror that of Italian military secret service General, Giandelio Maletti, who stated that "the military secret service was involved" and that "they didn't want to do it and it was actually the Americans who told them to do it" (Ganser 224). A Paduan member of Ordine Nuovo, Gianni Casalini, "confirm(ed) the fact that these subversive structures were acting in the certainty of being covered by the SID" (Cento Bull 48). The Piazza Fontana attack confirms at least the ineptitude, if not the complicity of the Italian services, in carrying out the alleged wants of another foreign power. However, accusations of American involvement began to be questioned when Philip Giraldi, a former CIA officer at the American embassy in Rome, refuted Maletti's claims. Giraldi, in an article published in *Panorama*, stated: "I can categorically say that the CIA was never involved in the Piazza Fontana massacre. It did not have the resources to do so and there was no motivation to push Italy further to the right by staging a terrorist attack. In fact, the CIA, which was considered by the (US) State Department as 'soft,' believed that the PCI (Partito Comunista Italiano or Communist Italian Party) was not a serious threat to Italian democracy" (Germoni para. 7)[30]. In fact, further analysis of Gen. Maletti,

[30] "Posso affermare categoricamente che la Cia non é mai stata coinvolta nella strage di Piazza Fontana. Non aveva le risorse per farlo e non c'era alcuna motivazione nel spingere l'Italia più a destra attraverso la messa in scena di un attacco terroristico.

Guido Giannettini (another SID informant), and Carlo Digilio, particularly regarding the 1970 failed Borghese coup, connects the Italian intelligence services to the events of the Years of Lead closer than the CIA and US.

The *Golpe Borghese* or Borghese coup was planned by neo-Fascists to occur on December 7th and 8th of 1970. The coup plan was named after a Fascist wartime military commander, Junio Valerio Borghese. It involved the kidnapping of then Italian president Giuseppe Saragat, the seizure of RAI, the assassination of the head of police, and the capture of the principal ministries of government including defense and the interior. The coup was never attempted but its plan came to the attention of the Italian Secret Services in 1973 and 1974 through the work of Captain Labruna of the SID. Labruna lured Borghese's friend and collaborator, Remo Orlandini, "into revealing a series of details concerning the 1970 attempted coup" (Cento Bull 50). Although seemingly a success of the SID, "most of the tapes with the recorded conversations [...] were not handed over to the judiciary; rather, they were put to a different, political use" (Cento Bull 50). In fact, "only four tapes were handed over to the investigating magistrates; the rest disappeared, with the exception of a set of copies of the tapes and the original written transcriptions, which remained in the hands of Labruna himself [...] It was only in the early 1990s that Labruna decided to collaborate [...] partly because he wanted to redress his reputation as the main villain within the Italian intelligence services, and he produced copies of sensitive original information, including all the tapes with the recorded conversations with Orlandini" (Cento Bull 51). The motivation to escape culpability and blame are also what

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Infatti, la Cia, che era considerata dal Dipartimento di Stato come "soft," riteneva che il Pci non fosse una seria minaccia per la democrazia italiana"

motivated Maletti, Giannetti, and Digilio to come forth regarding both the Piazza Fontana massacre and Borghese Coup. A report that discussed the Borghese coup, "prepared by SID agent and informer Guido Giannettini, [...] was later 'thinned out' by General Maletti, who destroyed an accompanying memo which set out the involvement in the conspiracy of Admiral Giovanni Torrisi, who had personally taken part in preparatory meetings for the coup with Salvatore Drago and various leaders of Avanguardia Nazionale" (Cento Bull 53). In the report, Giannettini wrote that "Avanguardia Nazionale had been created a few years earlier by the Ministry of the Interior in order to weaken the MSI" (Movimento Sociale Italiano, the political party formed to replace Mussolini's Fascist party) "and had joined Borghese's Fronte Nazionale" (Cento Bull 53). The Avanguardia Nazionale, an extreme neo-Fascist or neo-Nazi organization led by Stefano Delle Chiaie, maintained substantial connections with not only the intelligence services but other occult powers such as the P2 Masonic Lodge and the Ordine Nuovo. As mentioned earlier its goal was to weaken the MSI, that it considered to be too mild. Maletti's thinning out of the report signifies the first instance of the inability of the intelligence services to remain apolitical and objective. General Maletti's protection of terrorists, because of similar or matching political belief, is not only an individual failure but a failure of the SID at large, as it refused to punish or reprimand an internal supporter of terrorism. Furthermore, the final report on the Borghese coup contradicted his assertion of US involvement.

There was no mention of NATO and the CIA "in the final report" (Cento Bull 52). The Ordine Nuovo member charged for the Piazza Fontana bombing, Carlo Digilio, also accused the US of complicity in Italian terrorism. Digilio claimed that he "fully informed" two Americans "of the terrorist attacks that the Ordine Nuovo cells

were planning [...] including the attacks of 12 December 1969 (the Piazza Fontana massacre), a few days before they took place" (Cento Bull 57). He further ascertained that one of his two American contacts guaranteed the safety of the Ordine Nuovo from investigations and that American collaboration was rewarded with the ability to evade prosecution (Cento Bull 57). The Italian Court of Appeal "doubted Digilio's testimony" due to its reliance on a document allegedly drafted by US General Oswald Lee Winters who was "imaginary" or "nonexistent" (Cento Bull 59). Furthermore, the Court of Appeal found "no evidence" of and could not "conclusively identify" the two Americans in which Digilio claimed to maintain close and continual contact (Cento Bull 58). The lack of substantial evidence of American involvement will be further compounded in the case of Aldo Moro, which remains to be discussed later. The lack of substantiation of American complicity is significant in several ways. First, the US was used to sweep blame away from the rogue individuals within Italy's security structure. Second, those same individuals, upon closer inspection not only appear infinitesimally more culpable but demonstrate a failure of the same security service that employed them. Third, it demonstrates the political fragmentation of not only the citizenry at large but within the security services themselves. Finally, it epitomizes the possibility of a different foreign power wanting to frame the United States for its own aggression. The 1972 Peteano Attack and the Udine Airport Hijacking demonstrate the inefficacy and weakness of the SID and the intelligence apparatus at large, once more.

The two attacks were once again carried out by Ordine Nuovo, specifically the Udine section. The Peteano attack was "carried out by Vincenzo Vinciguerra" when he "placed explosives in a Fiat 500, then fired a few shots at the car, and finally informed the Carabinieri, via an anonymous phone call, of the 'fortuitous' finding and

its exact location" (Cento Bull 54). When the Carabinieri went to investigate the anonymous tip, the explosive was detonated remotely, killing all three Carabinieri officers instantly. A second attack by Ordine Nuovo, a plane hijacking, was attempted shortly thereafter the Peteano bombing. The plot ultimately failed when Ivano Boccaccio "was shot dead" attempting to hijack a plane from "Udine airport, Ronchi dei Legionari" (Cento Bull 54). When Boccaccio was killed, Vinciguerra and Carlo Cicuttini, the man responsible for the anonymous tip in the Peteano attack, "escaped to Spain" with the assistance of Ordine Nuovo, where Vinciguerra befriended Stefano Delle Chiaie, the leader of Avangardia Nazionale (Cento Bull 54). Their friendship was derived from mutual interest in neo-Fascism and lasted until Vinciguerra suspected "his new friend was linked to intelligence services" (Cento Bull 54). Upon the Italian government's investigation, a number of years later, following Vinciguerra's confession and surrender to authorities in 1979, the evidence presented during the inquiry "point(ed) to the existence of close links between the Italian intelligence services and neo-Fascist groups in the 1960s and early 1970s and to the obstruction of justice on the part of these same intelligence services during judicial investigations into the activities of the neo-Fascist groups" (Cento Bull 45). In his confession, Vinciguerra stated that he was "convinced that practically all neo-Fascist groups had acted in connivance" with Italian intelligence (Cento Bull 54). Perhaps most damning was the fact that Vinciguerra, as a "recognized and incontrovertible culprit," who "has never repented for his acts of violence" and was "a known neo-Fascist and member of Ordine Nuovo" was protected by "the intelligence services and the Carabinieri themselves" as "sufficiently strong evidence" demonstrated (Cento Bull 54-55). The intelligence services and the Carabinieri, who lost three service

members in the Peteano bombing, accomplished their protection of Vinciguerra until his confession by "cover(ing) up his crime" and "channel(ing) investigations in other directions away from the extreme right" (Cento Bull 55). The Carabinieri and the SID instead focused their investigations and inquiries on "the extreme left group *Lotta Continua*" based on anonymous admissions made to an intelligence official (Cento Bull 55). These confessions were deemed as untruthful, false, and deceptive. Once again, blame was being shifted from the groups responsible for the tragedies onto other forces. It is interesting to note that although these anonymous tips were investigated, "serious circumstantial and forensic evidence" was ignored (Cento Bull 55). The evidence that was willingly ignored by the appropriate government authorities "concerned the fact that at Ronchi dei Legionari Ivano Boccaccio had been found in possession of a gun, a 22-calibre Luger, which was the same type of gun which had been used to fire at the Fiat 500 in Peteano. Even though the same Carabinieri officers investigated the two crimes and knew that a 22-calibre gun had been used at Peteano, they never apparently established a link between the two events" (Cento Bull 55). The results "allow(ed) innocent people to be charged" while the "real culprits" remained unknown (Cento Bull 55). It was not until 6 years after Vinciguerra came forward, in 1985, that some of the culprits were brought to justice. The majority of those charged were from the intelligence services. The former intelligence officers were found guilty of "falsehood and obstruction of justice" (Cento Bull 55). One of them was Captain Labruna, the same man who possessed the tapes regarding the Borghese coup that did not turn them over to the magistrates but rather used them for political gain. Labruna, at the time a member of the SID, "allegedly had gone to Padua after the Peteano attack and the attempted hijack by Boccaccio and had discussed

these events with Massimilano Fachini of Ordine Nuovo (Cento Bull 56). Cento Bull (56) summarizes the significance of this conversation best when she ascertains that it demonstrates "that Labruna was convinced that Ordine Nuovo was responsible for this episode" and as such "the SID clearly had no intention of aiding investigations in the direction" of the Ordine Nuovo, instead advised Ordine Nuovo "to stop carrying out such 'spontaneous' acts of violence" (Cento Bull 56). All the information regarding the Peteano attack and attempted Udine hijacking, signifies that the SID and the rest of the Italian intelligence community failed particularly in two avenues. First, the SID did not remain apolitical and objective. The lack of objectivity and the presence of political persuasion in the Italian intelligence community was demonstrated when the SID and the Carabinieri willingly protected the Ordine Nuovo in their investigations while purposefully framing and targeting a leftist organization to further their politically maligned agenda. Second, the SID did not consider these terrorist and neo-Fascist organizations as "a threat to the security of the nation" but rather viewed them as contributors "to the strengthening of the political and state system" (Cento Bull 59). This was primarily demonstrated by the Carabinieri protecting Vinciguerra, a man who killed three of its officers in cold blood. If the security services failed to label these organizations rightfully as terrorists, they failed in their primary mission of protecting their citizenry from danger. Unfortunately for the citizenry, and to the dismay of legitimacy of the intelligence apparatus, these trends would continue with the Milan Police Headquarters bombing in 1973.

The Milan Police headquarters attack occurred in 1973 during a memorial ceremony for slain police commissioner Luigi Calabresi. Commissioner Calabresi was assassinated in May of 1972 for his suspected role in the death of Giuseppe Pinelli. At

the memorial service, a hand grenade was tossed among the congregation, killing four civilians, and injuring upwards of 40 people. The man responsible for the attack was Gianfranco Bertoli, a former and disillusioned member of the Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI) and informant for the Carabinieri. Once more, the investigation into the attack, by the intelligence services, demonstrates evidence of an alleged cover-up attempt. General Maletti, the same man who shirked responsibility for the Piazza Fontana attack by shifting blame onto the United States, sent a subordinate to Israel to "prepare a report exclusively for Maletti's eyes" which established Bertoli as "an anarchist who used to socialize with two brothers from Marseilles who belonged politically to the extreme left" (Cento Bull 50). It became apparent "many years later, in the early 1990s" that "the information hastily gathered by the captain (sent by Maletti) was false, as the two brothers who had befriended Bertoli in Israel, far from being left-wingers, had been members of a French organization which was the equivalent of Ordine Nuovo" (Cento Bull 50). Bertoli's prior role as a paid Carabinieri informer from "1954 up to 1960" and "from 1966 until at least 1971" was concealed through the destruction of "the file containing information on Bertoli" which was directed "from the then Head of the Secret Services" (Cento Bull 50). Judge Lombardi, tasked with reinvestigating the case discovered these inconsistencies and deliberate deceptions, in 1991. Regardless, following the Piazza Della Loggia bombing in 1974, it was evident that there needed to be a massive and far-reaching restructuring of the intelligence services.

In May of 1974, at an anti-Fascist demonstration in Brescia, "a bomb exploded" killing eight and wounding over one hundred (Cento Bull 4). Two men, Carlo Maria Maggi and Maurizio Tramonte were "handed life sentences" forty-one

years after the attack, in 2015. (British Broadcasting Company para. 1). Maggi, who was 80 at the time of his sentencing, was a member of *Ordine Nuovo* and "ordered the bombing" (British Broadcasting Company para. 9). Tramonte, who was 63 at the time of his sentencing, was a "former intelligence agent" and responsible for the organization of the attack and the subsequent misdirection of the police away from *Ordine Nuovo* (British Broadcasting Company para. 3, 9). The collaboration between a member of the intelligence services and a member of a far-right organization demonstrates the intimate organizational relationship between the secret services and right-wing terrorism during the Years of Lead. The Italian newspaper, *La Stampa*, called the "verdict 'historic'" because it was "the first time that both *Ordine Nuovo* and the intelligence services (were) so clearly linked to 1970s far-right violence" (British Broadcasting Company para. 8).

By 1977, as the Years of Lead raged on and investigations into the atrocities continued, the intelligence services underwent a "profound and radical transformation" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 21)[31]. The change was initiated by "law number 801 which established the Military Information and Security Service (SISMI) and the Democratic Information and Security Service (SISDE)" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 21)[32]. The two infantile agencies were "placed respectively under the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of the Interior" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza

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[31] "una profonda e radicale trasformazione"

[32] "legge n. 801 che ha istituito il Servizio per le informazioni e la sicurezza militare (SISMI) e il Servizio per le informazioni e la sicurezza democratica (SISDE)"

della repubblica para. 21)[33]. Despite their places under two different ministries, "the new law assigned top management, general political responsibility and coordination of information and security policy to the Prime Minister, who coordinated the two intelligence bodies through the Executive Committee for Information and Security Services (CESIS)" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 21)[34]. The two new intelligence organizations, SISMI and SISDE, along with CESIS, were evaluated in a CIA intelligence assessment entitled *Italian Counterrorism: Policies and Capabilities*. The CIA claimed that SISMI and SISDE were born out of "a desire to improve overall CT (counterterrorism) capabilities" and their creation marked the end of "the scandal-plagued services" (The Office of European Analysis at the Central Intelligence Agency). As for CESIS, the CIA described its structure as consisting "of officials appointed (directly) by the Prime Minister" and its responsibilities as "assisting the PM (Prime Minister) in carrying out his supervisory responsibility for intelligence and security matters" and "submit(ting) a written report to Parliament every six months on intelligence and security policies and their results" (The Office of European Analysis at the Central Intelligence Agency). Regardless of the intelligence structure's centralization under CESIS, and the abolishment of the SID and other failing intelligence agencies, the Italian State would be subject to further attacks during the Years of Lead. One year after the establishment of these new

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[33] "poste alle dipendenze rispettivamente del Ministro della difesa e del Ministro dell'interno"

[34] "l'alta direzione, la responsabilità politica generale e il coordinamento della politica informativa e di sicurezza al Presidente del Consiglio dei ministri, che coordinava i due organismi di intelligence tramite il Comitato esecutivo per i servizi di informazione e sicurezza (CESIS)"

agencies, in 1978, the intelligence structure would be confronted with one of the most infamous terrorist attacks of the Years of Lead, the kidnapping and execution of Aldo Moro.

Aldo Moro, two-time prime minister of Italy and president of the Christian Democratic party, was kidnapped on his way to the Italian Parliament because of his support of a compromise between the Christian Democrats (DC) and the PCI. The perpetrators blocaded his route with their own cars, exiting the vehicles to kill the bodyguards and security personnel that were assigned to protect Moro. Once the five body security officers were dead, the terrorists apprehended Moro and took him to an undisclosed location for 54 days where he was tried in the Red Brigade's so-called "people's court" and sentenced to execution. The kidnappers then dumped his body into the trunk of a Renault 4 on Via Caetani, symbolically equidistant between the headquarters of the PCI and the DC. The marked difference of this terrorist attack, as compared to the others previously discussed, was that the organization behind the attack, the *Brigate Rosse* or Red Brigades, were a far-left organization.

The targeted assassination of an individual to "strike the hearts of many" was the modus operandi of leftist terrorist organizations during the Years of Lead. Whereas right-wing terrorism's modus operandi aimed to kill and injure as many people as possible in its attacks and then subsequently framing the left as the perpetrators. A perfect example of leftist terrorism is the discriminate assassination of Luigi Calabresi, who was blamed by the left for the killing of Giuseppe Pinelli, as opposed to the attack on his memorial ceremony at the Milan Police HQ which exemplifies right-wing terrorism.

The Moro case, being a targeted capture and kill operation, is consistent with left-wing terrorism. The Red Brigades, who were responsible for the Moro Affair, had accomplished other assassinations prior to that of Aldo Moro. The group was initially weakened by the arrests of Alberto Franceshini and Renalto Curcio, in 1974 and 1976, but eventually consolidated and developed "the remaining BR members into a more violent, well disciplined, and radicalized organization" as a result of "the Italian Government's" and in particular, the secret services' "inability to completely dismantle the Red Brigade's mid-level leadership" (Sundquist 58). In this failure, the Red Brigades fell under the leadership of both Giovanni Senzani and Mario Moretti. The two men were later accused of framing Curcio and Franceshini and working for the secret services to cover the Red Brigades. If true, the intelligence services directly protected far-right organizations like *Ordine Nuovo* in the Piazza della Loggia bombing, and indirectly defended leftist terrorism by initially overlooking Senzani and Moretti's roles in the Moro affair because of their alleged assistance as informers. It is also interesting to note, perhaps because of the prior accusations of US involvement in right-wing terrorism on behalf of disgraced terrorists and Italian intelligence personnel, that once again the US was being accused of aiding and abetting this particular plot because they did not help in rescuing Aldo Moro. If the US had been allegedly assisting right-wing terrorist plots, why would they also have aided a left-wing organization that had an opposite agenda to their supposed foreign policy at the time? It is inherently contradictory to assume that the US would remain inert as its "anti-Communist" foreign policy was being undermined. Once again, this highlights the actuality of the situation: the US was not involved in Italian domestic affairs rather it was used as a scapegoat for the intelligence services. In fact, official US policy by

1974 was that the CIA or any US intelligence agency was “prohibit(ed)” from conducting “all undercover ‘operations in foreign countries,’ other than routine intelligence gathering, ‘unless and until the President (found) that each such operation (was) important to the national security of the United States” (The Washington Post archives para. 6). In essence, “rigid clamps” were “placed on secret U.S. intelligence operations” which “forced the Central Intelligence Agency to reject a top-priority request for help from Italy in that nation’s agony during the abduction and murder of Aldo Moro by left-wing terrorists” (The Washington Post archives para. 1). The formal request was made by the newly formed CESIS but was eventually denied “after CIA director Stansfield Turner and his legal advisers wrestled with the request for two weeks” on the basis that the lawyers “could not absolutely prove that the Moro-Red Brigades case involved ‘international’ terrorism” which would give the CIA the authority to act (The Washington Post archives para. 9). Regardless of the law prohibiting action on behalf of the CIA, US public sentiment surrounding the Moro affair is summarized in the *Rejecting a Plea to Help Moro* Washington Post (para. 13) article, that the result of Moro’s death was a “costly defeat in the war to preserve democratic institutions.” Essentially, without legal or political support, the US would not and could not involve itself in this inherently Italian situation. Although the creation of SISMI, SISDE, and CESIS improved the existing intelligence apparatus, the failure to locate Aldo Moro and to apprehend the terrorists in a timely manner could demonstrate the shortcomings of the new structure. The SISMI, SISDE, and CESIS would eventually succeed in 1981, but not before an additional far-right attack, which yielded the highest casualties of any terrorist attack during the Years of Lead.

On August 2, 1980, a bomb was planted in a suitcase in the waiting room of Bologna's train station. Once the device was detonated, it killed 85 people and wounded upwards of 200. Today, it remains "one of the deadliest terror attacks in Italian history" (British Broadcasting Company). Three hours after the detonation, which occurred at 10:25 in the morning, a neo-Fascist organization called a Roman newspaper to declare that "it planted the bomb" and was responsible for the attack (British Broadcasting Company). The organization, whose members were eventually charged with the bombing, was *Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari* or the Armed Revolutionary Nuclei, which was a neo-Fascist organization. Eyewitnesses who survived the attack recalled the events in harrowing fashion. Malcom Quantrill, a university professor, recollected only seeing "a flash of yellow light" and hearing not the explosion itself but "the crash of the masonry falling and the sound of breaking glass as the ticket window disintegrated" (British Broadcasting Company). He then recalled feeling and realizing that "there was blood" all over him and that "everyone" seemed to be "running, shouting and screaming." (British Broadcasting Company). Another eyewitness remembered a "middle-aged man" being "carried to an ambulance with blood pouring from a severed leg" (British Broadcasting Company). Perhaps the most morbid recollection came from the news report itself where it stated that "dozens of people who had rushed to the scene managed to get into the wrecked buildings to search for relatives and friends" (British Broadcasting Company). The impact of the bombing was felt nationwide, like the kidnapping and killing of Aldo Moro, and perhaps the two events spurred the intelligence services to undergo rapid improvements and enhancements. The intelligence services could be labeled as inefficacious again by failing to prevent an attack that allowed hundreds of lives to be

lost or dramatically altered directly, and much worse, thousands of lives to be forever disfigured indirectly. The resultant advancements made by the SISMI, SISDE, CESIS, and the creation of a police counter-terrorism unit in 1978, *Nucleo operativo centrale di sicurezza* (NOCS), would be on full display, in 1981, with the rescue of US General to NATO James Dozier. This situation demonstrated the US' willingness to assist their Italian counterparts only when their personnel was intimately involved. Even still, the US military or intelligence agencies would not successfully carry out the rescue, the Italian special police force NOCS which is a SWAT equivalent, working cooperatively with the Italian intelligence services would.

On December 17th, 1981, the Red Brigades would target another individual, this time Major General James Dozier, who was "chief of staff at NATO's southern European land forces" in Verona (Centers para. 3). The two members of the Red Brigades that were responsible for the kidnapping, carried out the plot by "posing as plumbers [...] claiming there was a leak in the apartment below [...] (and by) need(ing) to see if it was coming from Dozier's apartment" (Centers para. 3). The perpetrators then attacked General Dozier with the stock of one of their guns, gagged him with cloth, "place(d) him into a box which looked like it was meant to hold a small fridge," and placed the box into "the trunk of a rented van" (Centers para. 5). The kidnappers drove the van to a predetermined location where they moved themselves and Dozier into a Fiat van to drive him to Padova where he would be held captive. He was brought into an apartment in Padova, where "he was kept under a tent and chained to his bed" for the duration of his captivity (Centers para. 6). The captors would subject the General to other forms of abuse like: "chang(ing) the light bulb under the tent from blue to white in order to disorient Dozier's" perception of time and forcing him to

"listen to loud rock music continuously through headphones to keep him from hearing conversations around him" (Centers para. 7). His captivity lasted 39 days, when on January 25th "he was rescued by a 10-man SWAT team" (Centers para. 8). The operation was made possible by the successes of the intelligence structure who provided intelligence to NOCS that ultimately made the rescue. This sentiment is echoed in the CIA's intelligence assessment of Italy's counterterrorism capabilities, when it is noted that "the rescue of General Dozier in January 1982 was the result of better tactics and methods and the cause of further improvements." Two further successes of the intelligence services were realized around the same timeframe. The first took place with the arrest of 23 Red Brigade members from the Dozier case that "nearly eliminated" the Red Brigades according to Provincial Chief of Police, Peppino Gnisci (Kamm para. 7). The second success was the investigation that followed the uncovering of the list of P2 members, in April of 1981.

The P2 Masonic Lodge was often an accomplice of right wing terror organizations. It funded far-right terrorist organizations and its members and leader, Licio Gelli, were involved in the Borghese coup (Cento Bull 51), the Banco Ambrosiano scandal ("the bank had allegedly recycled illegal mafia money and sponsored Italian right-wing terrorists in their battle against the Italian Communists") and the Bologna train station bombing (Ganser 262). The Italian intelligence services, toward the end of the Years of Lead, uncovered the sinister web that made up the P2 masonic lodge in a raid on leader Licio Gelli's villa in April of 1981. In the documents uncovered in the raid, the intelligence services discovered that the P2 consisted of: fifty two "high-ranking officers of the Carabinieri paramilitary police," fifty "high-ranking officers of the Italian army," thirty seven "high-ranking officers of the Finance

Police," twenty-nine "high-ranking officers of the Italian navy," eleven "Presidents of the police," seventy "influential and wealthy industrialists," ten "presidents of banks," three "acting ministers," two "former ministers," one "president of a political party," thirty eight "members of parliament," and fourteen "high-ranking judges" (Ganser 261). The list continued: "others were mayors, directors of hospitals, lawyers, notaries and journalists [...] the most prominent person on the P2 list was Silvio Berlusconi." The exposure of Berlusconi as a P2 member did not end his career. On the contrary, he later entered politics and rose to become Prime Minister of Italy, while his business operations enabled him to become Italy's richest man (Ganser 261). The discovery of the members of this occult group, partially responsible for some of the worst terrorist attacks in Italian history, was both a success and a failure of the state intelligence apparatus. It was a success because the individuals could be identified and surveilled to ensure no further attacks would occur. It was a failure however because the intelligence apparatus was unable to prevent P2's projection into all facets of Italian society. This type of failure would resurface in the 1990s with the Mitrokhin archive.

The Years of Lead were a particularly tumultuous time in Italian society. There were numerous massive failures on behalf of the intelligence community ranging from covering up the acts of terrorist organizations to which high-ranking individuals agreed politically to failing to prevent future attacks over a period of roughly 20 years, from 1969 to 1982. Despite the failures throughout these two decades, the reformed intelligence structure improved towards the conclusion of the Years of Lead and postured itself for "counterterrorist matters" (The Office of European Analysis at the Central Intelligence Agency). Both the SISMI and SISDE devoted personnel to counterterrorism. The SISMI, which was responsible for "defending national security

from any threat in Italy and abroad" allocated "part of its 2200 personnel to counterterrorist measures" (The Office of European Analysis at the Central Intelligence Agency). Where, the SISDE, who was responsible for "defending the security of the Republic and its institutions from any threat, operating mainly in Italy" devoted its "staff of approximately 800 [...] exclusively" to counterterrorism. As the Years of Lead concluded, counterterrorism and internal defense did not disappear. They changed form. Internal defense pertained not to alleged US interference or fringe terrorist members actively working inside the government, rather it concerned KGB infiltration with the Mitrokhin commission. Counterterrorism changed shape from domestic extremism to a focus on radical Islam and religious terrorism. The Italian intelligence apparatus was tested and reformed during the years that followed to address these challenges, where they arrived in their present-day form.

Chapter 5

BEYOND THE YEARS OF LEAD TO TODAY

While the intelligence apparatus reformed and grew to meet and eventually end the challenges faced during the Years of Lead by the late 1980s, new investigations into terrorist attacks and tragedies yielded new information. As established in the previous chapter, definitive blame for some of these tragedies remain elusive. However, what became clear is that some elements of the Italian intelligence apparatus not only failed their citizenry in protecting them from political violence by preventing such attacks, but also indirectly abetted the terrorist organizations by interfering in judicial inquiries and investigations into these events. Individuals within these agencies and organizations such as General Maletti and Guido Giannettini tried to shirk blame for these atrocities not onto the malign terrorist organizations on both the far-left, and more so, on the far-right, but onto Western forces such as NATO and the United States. Even though it was determined that the blame on the US was misplaced, a 2002 legislative inquiry proved this definitively once more, and demonstrated the complicity, persuasion, or interference of a different foreign power which maintained an interest in baseless accusations being leveled at the US and CIA. The 2002 Mitrokhin Commission provided evidence of Soviet infiltration of the Italian government, secret services, and society at large. Spies for the USSR existed in the highest annals of the Italian government and the USSR was reportedly intimately involved with leftist terrorism with the Red Brigades. A deeper analysis of the evidence presented in the Mitrokhin commission exemplifies the common yet misplaced Italian perception that the CIA is and was a malign actor during the Years

of Lead. The Moro affair is the case that embodies this idea and serves as an example for the true foreign culprit of terror during these terrible years. This chapter uses hindsight to explore the extent of Soviet collaboration with leftist terrorism in Italy, further examines the most recent reorganization of the intelligence services and its respective political environment, and presents some recommendations to place Italy on par with the practice and understanding of intelligence in other Western countries.

The Mitrokhin commission was unimaginatively named after a former Soviet intelligence officer, Vasili Mitrokhin. Mr. Mitrokhin "began working as a Soviet intelligence officer in 1948 and eventually became an archivist for the KGB" which is the job in which he was serving when he became "alienated by government methods and aims that had assumed their most brutal totalitarian forms during the invasion of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968" (Drake 344). As a form of disobedience, Mitrokhin "document(ed) the agency's enormities" beginning in 1972, when he recorded notes "directly from archival documents on the foreign operations of the KGB. At the risk of his life, he had compiled this personal record for the next twelve years until his retirement in 1984" (Drake 344). Once Mitrokhin retired, he attempted to approach his American counterparts at the CIA which were disinterested in his siphoned archive. Contrary to the CIA, the British secret service, Military Intelligence, Section 6, commonly referred to as MI6, "immediately perceived the importance of what he (Mitrokhin) had to offer" and allowed him to emigrate to England the following year where "MI6 translated an abridged version of his archive and made it available to friendly intelligence agencies, including Italy's SISMI" (Drake 344). The archive of material contained the broad intentions of the KGB, such as establishing large Communist electorates in Western European countries. The

Communist parties of France and Italy, which were viewed as "key elements in the Soviet strategy against the United States," received "large subsidies from the Soviet Union" (Drake 345). Perhaps more damning were the specific or precise instances of Soviet involvement on the Peninsula. First, came the uncovering of Italian spies who had collaborated with and were on the payroll of the KGB. The Mitrokhin archive unveiled Italians who were "alleged recipients of Moscow's paychecks" (Smith para. 2). Among the recipients were "politicians, an Italian ambassador, Foreign Ministry employees, businessmen and journalists" and perhaps the "most sensational allegation" was that Armando Cossutta, founder, and leader of the Party of the Italian Communists, "was an informant for Moscow" (Smith para. 2). Second, came the insight gained into the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II. In 1981, Mehmet Ali Agca, shot Pope John Paul II four times as he was greeting followers in the Vatican square. The documents produced by the Mitrokhin commission confirm "beyond all reasonable doubt that the leaders of the Soviet Union took the initiative to eliminate Pope Karol Wojtyla" (Drake 348). According to the Mitrokhin archive, Ali Agca's funding and operational assistance on behalf of the KGB's proxy Bulgarian service was analogous to the Czech security service's assistance to the Red Brigades in the Aldo Moro affair.

Leftist violence, as determined in the previous chapter, discriminately killed important state officials. Aldo Moro's case falls within these parameters and can be extrapolated to include other instances of political terrorism that were blamed on the West. Mitrokhin's notes, as uncovered in the commission, "indicated that the Czech secret service agency, the StB, had supported the Red Brigades" (Drake 345). At the time, Czechoslovakia was a territory of the Soviet Union for over a decade, and its

security structure operated as a proxy for the KGB. After Czech direct support to the Red Brigades in the operation of capturing and imprisoning Aldo Moro, the KGB began "Operation Sperone" which was "a disinformation campaign designed to blame the CIA for Moro's kidnapping and murder" (Drake 346). A specific example of the KGB's smear campaign was Moscow's planting of "a report in a leading Italian magazine, Panorama, that the CIA was behind the 1978 assassination of former prime minister Aldo Moro" (Smith para. 17). Conceivably that could be why the same magazine, in 2014, published an interview with Philip Giraldi, an ex-CIA agent that categorically denied any American involvement in the Moro case. The Red Brigades involvement with Moscow went further than just the Moro affair. A "Soviet military plan" uncovered in the Mitrokhin archive, outlined a potential invasion route into Italy, for "sometime between 1975 and 1985," which not only concurred with "the high water-period of left-wing terrorism in Europe" but further "coincide(d) in a disquieting way with the cities that witnessed the birth, the development, and the entrenchment of the Red Brigades" (Drake 348). The conclusions of the commission were clear: "the Red Brigades never had acted independently," instead they "were manipulated by handlers in Eastern Europe acting on orders from Moscow" and that the "villain" for these events was "the KGB, not the CIA" (Drake 348). Regardless of this official pronouncement, the image of the Italian secret services was tarnished, as well as the public perception of the CIA.

SISMI received the British reports intermittently throughout the mid to late 1990s, under the governments of Lamberto Dini, Romano Prodi, and Massimo D'Alema (Drake 349). The commission's majority "faulted" the past prime ministers for "the government's failure to expedite the arrival of the Mitrokhin reports" (Drake

350). The report particularly reprimanded and blamed "SISMI and the three leftist governments for mishandling the reports" with the use of this quote found within the report: "'the omissions of the secret service, supported if not directly determined by the political authority, compromised the possibility of ascertaining the responsibility of those who had performed acts of espionage in Italy on behalf of the Soviet Union'" (Drake 350). Essentially, the 2002 Parliamentary Majority, led by prime minister Silvio Berlusconi, arrived at the conclusion that SISMI and in turn the three administrations when Mitrokhin's reports trickled in from England, allowed for the maintenance of Russian spies in Italy without the possibility of apprehending these individuals promptly, or leveraging them to send falsified reports and information back to Russia. The counterargument to the majority report was that "SISMI [...] did not function in the manner of a history department engaged in seminars and colloquia about the past [...] it functioned as all intelligence agencies should, with current security issues uppermost in mind" (Drake 350). SISMI retorted that it did follow "all normal procedures" regarding the Mitrokhin archive, that was categorized as "an 'obsolete' intelligence matter" (Drake 350). The counterpart to the majority report, produced by the Parliament minority, and the rebuttal of the SISMI itself was an attempt to "take the Mitrokhin Archive out of contemporary politics and confine its impact to the historical past" (Drake 350). The strategy followed in the minority report and reasserted by SISMI is that "the distinction between these two spheres does not really exist, least of all in a country like Italy, whose politics today are thoroughly conditioned by competing versions of the historical past" (Drake 353). Once the Mitrokhin documents arrived at SISMI, they should have been promptly evaluated and cross-examined for names that were still currently working in the Italian government,

before being categorized as antiquated or out-of-date. Perhaps then, the Soviet-turned-Russian espionage network could have been decisively extinguished, allowing for a more positive portrayal of the secret services in the majority report, and a softer public perception. Regardless of the findings that the KGB, not only infiltrated the Italian government extensively but framed the CIA and US for its malign activity, public perception of the CIA remained and remains at an all-time low.

In 2018, Stefania Paladini published a study of the CIA's public perception in Italy which found that the KGB's efforts during the Years of Lead were so successful in blaming the US for their activity that the CIA still maintains a negative and malicious image in Italy today. The CIA shouldering blame was not only the work of KGB disinformation, but the work of Italian politicians on both sides of the political spectrum, and the Italian media. Historically, since the CIA's founding in 1947, "the Agency has often been accused of involvement in all the domestic (Italian) mysteries" (Paladini 116). Politicians propagate these theories because the public perception is so uniform regarding the CIA that it helps them gain reelection. Their assertion is that Italy was solely a victim and not a suspect in the tragedies primarily committed during the Years of Lead. The media distributes these falsehoods because of the ability to rouse interest and in turn, ratings. The politicians and media wrongfully maintain the image of "the Agency" as a "dark and invincible power" that has "influenced when not directed all domestic black operations, including attempts of golpe (coups) and terrorist attacks" which has permanently restrained Italy to "a state of 'limited sovereignty'" (Paladini 116). The CIA is also assumed to have "cooperated with 'deviated' Italian secret services to destabilize the democracy in Italy" and created a political environment which made it "impossible for the Communist Party to lead the

country during the Cold War, using all means, legal and illegal, to prevent it from happening" (Paladini 116). Eventually, with the investigation into the Mitrokhin Archive, the view of the CIA by Italian politicians changed, albeit for a short period of time, as "many sectors of the establishment" began to "point their finger at the Soviets" on the basis on not only the Mitrokhin archive but in the "words of many of the Red Brigades" that the Moro Affair was the "KGB's responsibility" (Paladini 119). However, public opinion was unfazed, it remained "overwhelmingly in the sense of CIA's involvement" (Paladini 119). Partial responsibility for this continued and misplaced "conventional wisdom" lies with "many influential and respected Italian magazines, newspapers, (L'Espresso, Panorama, La Repubblica) and TV channels (especially the national service, RAI, which ran a few series of investigative journalism about the event, such as La Notte Della Repubblica, Blu Notte, I Misteri D'Italia) that have consistently assumed that one of the leading Red Brigades terrorists in Moro's abduction, Mario Moretti, was a CIA agent" (Paladini 120). This was merely a conspiracy theory and had no real backing. The common perception that the CIA was a lead actor in the Moro affair was disparaged further by the uncovering of "a sort of endorsement by at least a consistent part of the US establishment" and some of the declassified US documents that demonstrate that the "CIA has never regarded the PCI as a such a threat to stability to make it necessary to support a right-wing turn on the like of Chile's Pinochet and that the USA had no real interest in Moro's killing" (Paladini 122-123). Paladini (123) then cites Philip M. Giraldi, the man interviewed by Panorama in 2014 and referenced earlier in this paper, and concludes, thanks to the help of a few declassified CIA documents regarding the kidnapping, that his testimony is true because the CIA and in turn the US viewed Moro as "a much-needed stabilizing

element in the often-tumultuous Italian political landscape instead of a menace himself." Regardless of the proof to the contrary, perceived CIA involvement is still commonplace among Italian citizens for several reasons as outlined in Paladini (125). First, "cultural barriers and language issues" exist between the US and Italy (Paladini 125). The majority of Italians, of which there are 60 million, do not speak English. In fact, approximately only 5 million Italians can speak and read English, or 8.3% of the population. Therefore, the 91.7% majority of Italians receive their news exclusively from the aforementioned news outlets that previously published anti-US conspiracy theories. Second, the negative image and inherent suspicion maintained by the citizenry about the Italian secret services, because of their defunct and ineffectual history, is secondarily projected upon the CIA. Italy, unlike other modern and industrialized countries, does not consider intelligence services to be "an important component of national security" or worthy of "respect even when criticized and investigated" because "the word 'intelligence' has been perceived as something negative, or, even worse, as an instrument of repression and coercion" due to "general suspicion [...] that can be traced back to the Roman times" where the "Romans had an instinctive aversion to spies (frumentarii) and informers" (Paladini 126). This negative perception of the domestic services has been shifted onto the CIA because Italians view the CIA as more effective and in turn "more powerful and ruthless" (Paladini 126). Third, and lastly, a law analogous to that of the Freedom of Information Act or (FOIA) does not exist in Italy. The FOIA, or laws similar to it in other non-US countries, allow for the release of information by request from the security services or any other branch of government of previously unreleased or protected information by request from its citizenry. Of course, there are exceptions to the law when the

documents requested are deemed to be relevant to current national security and/or the potential release of that information being a danger to the security of the country or an individual. Contrary to these laws, the *Segreto di Stato* or State Secret in Italy is employed to shield the citizenry from information for "potentially unlimited duration" on the basis of "political nature, done on request of the Prime Minister" not national security. As such, politicians can "prevent the disclosure of any of the acts declared as covered by state secret to the judiciary power or any other" relevant body of power (Paladini 127). In essence, holistic and objective investigations were and can never be accomplished, specifically because of the prohibition of the release to magistrates and judicial officials of materials relevant to the events of the Years of Lead. A useful comparison of the duration of state secrets or confidentiality is to that of France. In France, the duration of state secrecy is "60 years" as opposed to an indefinite time in Italy (Paladini 127). The lack of available information regarding intelligence practice in Italy, combined with the boundless duration of the state secret preventing fruitful investigations and inquiries, has hampered the Italian services' image in Italy and permitted the propagation of conspiracy and misinformation regarding their own domestic services and that of the US. The fact that many Italians, unfamiliar with the structure of the US government, consider any "American service" as being "simply the CIA" further hampers the US' perception (Paladini 125). Despite the discoveries of the Mitrokhin commission which determined the KGB's culpability in the kidnapping and killing of Aldo Moro among other attempted atrocities in Italy, the public perception of the US and CIA may have informed the Italian government's decision to act in the 2003 Abu Omar affair.

Following the attacks of September 11th, the world and NATO were hard-pressed to combat Islamic radicalism. When the US proposed its invasion of Iraq, which in hindsight was founded on unfounded intelligence, Europe and much of the world was split. Countries were divided on whether to support military intervention while contributing members of their own armed forces, supporting the invasion without contributing their own personnel, or not supporting the invasion altogether. Italy was in the second group of countries, it stood with its Atlantic ally, but did not want to commit its forces to the fight. Italy would however collaborate through its intelligence channels with the US. A particular example of this collaboration would yield Italian aid in the US' practice of rendition. Extraordinary rendition, or rendition for short, is the capture of a suspect, in this case a suspected terrorist, and their extradition or transfer to an allied country with looser laws on the proper treatment of prisoners. In 2003, the SISMI and the CIA collaborated on a rendition case surrounding a man named Osama Mustafa Nasr (Abu Omar). Omar "was an Egyptian Muslim cleric who had been granted political refugee status in Italy but had come under investigation by the Italian authorities" (Pergantis 761) that "suspected him of preaching violence from his Milan mosque and recruiting militants to send to Iraq in anticipation of the American invasion" (Donadio para. 16). On February 17, 2003 Abu Omar was "abducted in Milan in the middle of the day by CIA operatives with the acquiescence or connivance of the Italian military intelligence service (SISMI)" (Pergantis 761). Following his kidnapping, he was transported to "the U.S. air base in Aviano, Italy, and flown first to Ramstein, Germany, and then to Egypt, where the authorities held him incommunicado and without charges until February 2007 (except for an interlude in 2004 when he was released for approximately a month)" (Pergantis

761). It was during this "interlude" period when he was released in Egypt that he was able to call "his wife in Italy to say he had been tortured" or more precisely, subjected to the controversial enhanced interrogation techniques (Donadio para. 16). An investigation by Italian authorities ensued: the Italian government and secret services seemed to break from their troubled past by acting "initially responsive to the prosecutor's requests" (Pergantis 762).

That response would unfortunately transfigure itself relatively quickly into the mold of the past when "the investigation revealed the involvement of Italian authorities in the abduction" causing the government to "invoke the state secrets privilege" on "all parts of the investigation that touched on the relationship between the CIA and SISMI" (Pergantis 762). It should also be noted that U.S. "intelligence authorities sought to obstruct the investigation by providing misleading information" along with their Italian counterparts (Pergantis 761). The investigators then had to change course and piece together the rendition without the assistance of either government involved. They were able to accomplish this by "reconstruct(ing)" Omar's "disappearance using cellphone records traced to the American agents" (Donadio para. 18). From the cell phone data, the prosecutors were able to determine that "the operatives used false names but left a paper trail" that included "credit card bills at luxury hotels in Milan" (Donadio para. 18). The first Italian trial began in March of 2009 but ended relatively quickly when "Italy's Constitutional Court ruled [...] that any evidence of coordination between the Italian secret services and the C.I.A. violated state secrecy rules and was therefore inadmissible" (Donadio para. 12). The legal basis for this decision, as determined by the court, was that "the state secrets privilege serves the salus rei publicae (the state's welfare or security), and that

national security interests thus take absolute precedence over any other interests and rights that could be protected by declassifying the material" (Pergantis 764). However, the seeming victory for the US and Italian secret services would be short lived. In May of 2009, two months after the first case, judge Oscar Magi would rule "that there was enough evidence to proceed with the case" essentially overruling the Constitutional Court's earlier decision (Donadio para. 12). The case would ultimately lead to the conviction of "a base chief for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and 22 other Americans, almost all C.I.A. operatives" (Donadio para. 1). Magi's convictions would not extend to the CIA's Italian counterparts. Using the same clause that the Constitutional Court provided in March, "the judge did not convict five high-ranking Italians charged in the abduction, including a former head of Italian military intelligence, Nicolò Pollari" on the grounds of state secrecy (Donadio para. 6). It would take four more years, in 2013, in an appellate court, to convict SISMI members. In the appeal, Nicolò Pollari, former head of Italian military intelligence was "sentenced to 10 years in prison," his deputy, Marco Mancini was sentenced "to nine years" and three other Italian secret service officials "were also sentenced to six years each" all for their "role in the kidnapping of" Abu Omar (Pianigiani para. 1-2). In 2016, the investigation was sent to and reviewed once more by the European Court of Human rights. The Court ruled unanimously in favor of Omar and against the Italian state in the "view that by invoking the state secrets privilege in an abusive way, Italy had deprived the applicants of an effective remedy for both the criminal and the civil components of the case in violation of Article 13 of the European Court Human rights, because they had been unable to avail themselves 'of effective and practical remedies capable of leading to the identification and punishment of those responsible [...] and to

an award of compensation'" (Pergantis 764). Regardless of the rulings, the convictions maintained "little practical effect" because they did not "change the close relations between the United States and Italy nor did they reveal whether the government of Prime Minister Berlusconi had approved the kidnapping" (Donadio para. 4). In fact, none of the Americans were extradited, and Robert Seldon Lady, the CIA base chief specifically named in the first convictions, was arrested in Panama before being released within 24 hours. Although minimally significant in practice, the Abu Omar affair was significant in indirect ways in principle. First, the European's court ruling against the state secret proved that this clause was often employed politically and often at the expense of the citizenry, in this case Abu Omar. Second, it represented the first time Italian intelligence officials faced justice, which could have impacted public opinion in their favor in the knowledge that they were finally held accountable. Third, the Abu Omar affair symbolized the Republic's first official rebuke of the actions of a foreign intelligence service, in this case the CIA. In the years that followed, US influence in Italy would be maintained while Russian influence would increase.

In 2007, the Italian intelligence services underwent their most recent restructuring, under the "application of law 124/2007" that "establish(ed) the Information System for the Security of the Republic" or *Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica* (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 23)[35]. The organizational reconstitution was an effort to adapt and "respond also to the changed-social national and political-international context and to the new economic, cyber and energy challenges that always require new operational

[35] "con l'applicazione della legge 124/2007 [...] istituisce il Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della Repubblica"

tools and new skills" that have grown exponentially in the first two decades of the 21st century (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 23)[36]. While the Information System for the Security of the Republic replaced CESIS, the former parent organization that oversaw SISMI and SISDE, the two new agencies formed under the law 124/2007 which replaced the SISMI and SISDE, were the *Agenzia informazioni e sicurezza esterna* or the External Information and Security Agency (AISE) and the *Agenzia informazioni e sicurezza interna* or the Information and Internal Security Agency (AISI). The AISE, which replaced SISMI, "is entrusted with information activities on threats to the security of the Republic from abroad, counter-espionage outside national borders and counterproliferation activities" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 26)[37]. The AISI, which replaced SISDE, "carries out information activities for the defense of the internal security of the Republic and democratic institutions, as well as those for the protection of national interests and counter-espionage in Italian territory" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 27)[38]. The overall Italian intelligence structure became more centralized in this format because each agency under and including the Information System for the Security of the Republic, and the military intelligence

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[36] "per rispondere anche al mutato contesto sociale-nazionale e politico-internazionale e alle nuove sfide economiche, cyber ed energetiche che richiedono sempre nuovi strumenti operativi e nuove professionalità"

[37] "affidate le attività di informazione sulle minacce alla sicurezza della Repubblica provenienti dall'estero, il controspionaggio fuori dai confini nazionali e le attività di controproliferazione"

[38] "volge attività di informazione per la difesa della sicurezza interna della Repubblica e delle istituzioni democratiche, nonché quelle per la protezione degli interessi nazionali e il controspionaggio in territorio italiano"

structure, now reported directly to the "Prime Minister" rather than two separate ministers, those of Defense and the Interior (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 24). The Prime Minister is additionally "responsible for the appointment of directors and deputy directors of each agency" (Sistema di informazione per la sicurezza della repubblica para. 24)[39]. The Prime Minister, being the receptor for intelligence information, allows for better cross-reference and analysis across the Italian secret services, as well as better operational coordination when action or responses need to be taken. Secondarily, the appointment of the directors and deputy directors by the Prime Minister, ensures professional compatibility among the directors of each agency in contributing to the State's mission of protecting its citizenry in an ethically permissible way. The latest reorganization of the Italian services has been largely successful because it is the only remaining large European country that has not had an instance of Islamic terrorism within its borders or territories. The lack of Islamic terrorism in Italy, while it continues to successfully operate and terrorize other major European countries is inherently a success of the Italian intelligence services. First, "administrative deportations of foreign nationals suspected of being involved in terrorism" on the basis of information and investigations gained and completed by the intelligence services have "expelled and returned about 400 people to their country of origin" since 2015 (Bonino and Beccaro para. 6-7). Second, and perhaps more significantly, the Anti-terrorism Strategic Analysis Committee (CASA) which was unveiled in May of 2019, is a "common platform where Italian security forces share information about terrorist groups,

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[39] "compete la nomina di direttori e vicedirettori di ciascuna agenzia"

intelligence, people, and threats" to "centralize information and intelligence from different sources and security forces to improve anti-terrorism prevention activities, to coordinate operations against groups or people suspected to be related to Jihadist movements, and to share intelligence" (Bonino and Becarro para. 9). Third, is the history and "deep experience" the Italian security services have in "fighting international and domestic terrorism for many decades" (Bonino and Becarro para. 10). Taken together, Italy has been able to prevent catastrophic attacks like those in other Western European nations.

Regardless of unilateral Italian success, the problem of Islamic terrorism in Europe has triggered a reevaluation of intelligence cooperation and collaboration in not just the European Union (EU) but NATO. Intelligence cooperation and collaboration within NATO is the future in combating Islamic radicalism and Russian malign influence.

At "a special meeting of NATO Heads of State and Government on 25 May 2017 in Brussels" representatives to NATO from each of its members agreed on "the establishment of a terrorism intelligence cell" (Ballast 2). The creation of an intelligence group dedicated to terrorism within NATO requires deeper collaboration and intelligence sharing between member States. Ballast (2) describes the current precedent regarding international intelligence sharing: "states and their national services are reluctant to share sensitive, classified information with international organizations and favor cooperation on a more controllable, bilateral, case-by-case basis." The rationale behind this reluctance is that "common threat perception (and) mutual trust" must be established prior to the sharing of a particular piece of intelligence because sharing said information "could endanger one's own source"

(Ballast 2). The history of NATO also contributes to the unwillingness of NATO members to share intelligence because of the assumption "that all NATO forces would remain under national command" and therefore "strategic intelligence would be mainly national intelligence" (Ballast 3). Bilateral intelligence sharing between nations that had established trust and were cooperating on a problem or issue was not uncommon. It was the "non-secure Brussels apparatus" that promoted bilateral sharing at the expense of intelligence collaboration with all of the Member states (Ballast 3). Other confounding restraints on wide-spread intelligence sharing within NATO were the "different languages, cultures, capabilities, and infrastructures" that each Member state possessed (Ballast 4). NATO can overcome these obstacles by securing communication channels between its Members to share intelligence, incentivizing the sharing of intelligence universally with its members, and agreeing upon a language which will be used to publish and disseminate intelligence. Once these issues have been resolved, NATO can address the organizational wants of each member state in the creation of a terrorism intelligence cell. Regardless of what the organization will ultimately resemble, the need for a counterterrorism intelligence cell is widely recognized among NATO members. Perhaps equally recognized is the need for collaboration in countering Russian misinformation campaigns. The collective NATO initiative to share intelligence weds the future of the Italian secret services to that of NATO.

Russian misinformation, propaganda, and malign influence in Italy has existed since the conclusion of World War II as proven by the Mitrokhin commission. Russian influence continues today and is allegedly not met with animosity, rather it seems to be welcomed by a part of the Italian populace. According to Germani and Iacoponi

(11) “popularity among the Italian public of Vladimir Putin” is increasing because of the public’s perception that Putin is “a strong and effective leader, the only leader saving Europe from the threats of Islamist terrorism and mass illegal immigration.” Additionally, some of the Italian public views Putin as “a powerful symbol of ‘sovereigntism’” which may be a direct result of “Kremlin propaganda efforts, which for several years had been emphasizing Putin’s role as a great leader who restored Russia’s sovereignty against foreign efforts to weaken and destabilize it” (Germani and Iacoponi 11). Clearly, the Russian propaganda mill in Italy is functioning healthily. The anti-establishment and populist parties that have risen in Italy due to the populace’s dissatisfaction with the status quo add to the pro-Russian shift in public opinion. Regardless of political persuasion, these parties “embrace and spread Russian strategic narratives, including anti-Western and anti-American ones, they consistently support Moscow’s foreign policy actions, and they propose policies that favor Russia’s geopolitical interests [...] that tend to undermine the cohesion of the EU and NATO (Germani and Iacoponi 12). In return, these parties, specifically the *Lega Nord* and the *Movimento 5 Stelle* “receive media support, primarily in the form of visibility in Kremlin-controlled international media as well as Russian media campaigns hostile to the Italian (establishment) government” (Germani and Iacoponi 12). The *Lega Nord* or Northern League maintain contact with Aleksandr Dugin who has “entered the mainstream of the Russian political scene” and in 2014, the Northern League “set up the Lombardy-Russia Cultural Association (ACRL) in order to support the development of its political contacts in Russia, relay Russian strategic narratives to the Italian public, and facilitate business relationships between the Lombardy business community and Russian entrepreneurs” (Germani and Iacoponi 14). Although the

Movimento 5 Stelle or 5 Star Movement is less public about its pro-Russian sentiments, “the party launched a campaign against anti-Russian sanctions” on the rationale of one member of its leadership, Manlio di Stefano, who believes “Europe is being dragged by Washington into a dangerous crusade against Russia” (Germani and Iacoponi 17). In addition to campaigning against Russian sanctions, the Five Star Movement’s “top politicians began to express pro-Moscow views and to embrace Kremlin strategic narratives” (Germani and Iacoponi 17). The prime example of this is Di Stefano’s belief that “Ukraine’s Maidan revolution” was a “‘Western-backed coup aimed at bringing NATO to Russia’s borders” (Germani and Iacoponi 17). Di Stefano's response was a call for both the lifting of Western sanctions and “for closer Italian-Russian intelligence cooperation on counterterrorism” (Germani and Iacoponi 17). If the rise of populist parties in Italy undermines the relationship between NATO and Italy’s intelligence apparatus, then “Russian influence in Italy is bound to increase” and will “progressively undermine the country’s Western-oriented foreign policy as well as the strength and stability of its democratic system” (Germani and Iacoponi 19). In essence, Italy will retain its precedent, in regard to intelligence practice, of being swayed by domestic politicians in collaboration with foreign powers, in this particular case Russia. It appears that the maintenance of this unfortunate intelligence history has already continued when Russia sent “aid workers” to Italy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Italy, one of the countries hardest hit by the beginning of the pandemic, was in desperate need of help. Russia realized that it could not only advance its international image through an offer of assistance to Italy but that it could also increase the reach of its espionage network in Italy. According to Follain, Speciale, and Kravchenko (para.

2), La Stampa was the first newspaper to report that “some military staff sent by Russia” to assist Italy were actually “spies.” These authors (para. 13) assert that La Stampa further accused Russia of “deploy(ing)” biological warfare specialists as well as intelligence officers “in the area around Bergamo without informing Italian authorities.” Follain, Speciale, and Kravchenko (para. 8) rationalize this particular example as an extension of the trend presented in Germani and Iacoponi when their article states: “Putin’s opportunistic diplomacy follows a long courtship of officials in Rome, who are among the biggest advocates of a rapprochement with Moscow within the EU and NATO.” If Italian intelligence personnel could determine definitively that Russia deployed intelligence operatives disguised as aid workers, it should dispel these individuals at once and increase sanctions on Russia with its NATO allies. If this is the case, and Italy failed to do either, it could risk the dangerous continuation of malign domestic and foreign influence for years and decades to come.

The Italian intelligence apparatus, reformed on the heels of the Mitrokhin commission report, seemed to be functioning effectively and independently for the first time. It appeared that the Italian intelligence apparatus was finally standing up for itself by holding both American and Italian officers accountable for their actions. The Italian intelligence apparatus also postured itself in a position of further strengthening through intelligence collaboration with its NATO allies. Unfortunately, this trend was not long-lived. The rise of populism has undermined Italy’s relationship with the US, NATO, and the EU, in favor of a better relationship with Russia. Mario Draghi’s government, although embryonic, may be able to resist this unnerving trend as posited by the Brookings article. Mario Draghi became Prime Minister after negotiations with the various political factions in power following Matteo Renzi’s withdrawal of

"support for the Conte-led government" due to "disagreements over access to European funding via the European Stability Mechanism, the management of the European Union Recover Facility, reopening of schools" and "the management of the intelligence agencies" (De Maio para. 1). De Maio (para. 6) postulates that "a high-profile figure like Mario Draghi-who has top level experience in European institutions-may take potentially stronger stances in international and European arenas," more specifically, "Italy may acquire more political leverage in the EU, challenging the Franco-German leadership in Europe and in its relations with the United States." Essentially, Italy will gain stronger, more self-favorable, ties in not only its relationship to the EU but its relationship across the Atlantic with the US. Regardless, it is not Draghi, but the leaders of the coming decades that will determine whether Italy successfully throws off the chains of past intelligence inefficacy and slow improvement or continues down the path of further domestic and foreign fragmentation and sway.

CONCLUSION

The first pre-unification Italian intelligence apparatus was analogous to the regional identities in Italy. It was regionally based, lacked a centralized and unified organization, and often operated with angst and jealousy to its domestic counterparts. The apparatus was refined once unification occurred, but regional identities, organizational overlap, and bureaucratic jealousy yielded mass casualties during the First World War and led to the Rise of Benito Mussolini and Fascism. Once in power, Mussolini unilaterally strengthened the intelligence agency directly under his control, OVRA, and purposely weakened or ignored the shortcomings of the other intelligence agencies and offices: which contributed to Mussolini's banishment. The Republic of Italy, formed on the foundation laid by Partisan victory, maintained ex-Fascist and neo-Fascist employees within its intelligence structure who overlooked and disregarded terrorist attacks orchestrated by intelligence personnel themselves, collaborators, or groups with similar political ideologies. It was during this time that the Soviet Union infiltrated some of the highest positions of the Italian government, to be discovered later in the Mitrokhin archive and report. During *gli anni di piombo* or the Years of Lead, hundreds and thousands of civilians were killed and wounded in terrorist attacks. The intelligence services, when not complicit in these actions, frequently prevented impartial and objective investigations which often allowed the culprits of these atrocities to escape justice on the basis of the *segreto di stato* or state secret. This clause, as well as the lack of a law similar to the American "Freedom of

information act," has prevented the citizenry from learning about intelligence practice and has allowed conspiracy theories about intelligence operations to maintain prevalence in the media and public at large. To prevent the expense of future generations of Italians, the state secret clause needs to be reevaluated and a freedom of information law should be implemented.

To strengthen the intelligence practice of the Peninsula to address the challenges of today and tomorrow, Italy needs to remain steadfast in its intelligence partnership with NATO in combatting Islamic terrorism today, with an eye on addressing threats of tomorrow. While recognizing the strength and collaboration ability of NATO, Italy must remain the so-called sole proprietor of its intelligence services. It cannot be overtly swayed by the foreign policy agendas of its allies. Perhaps more importantly however is an increased investment in counterintelligence practice to prevent the infiltration of malign actors, both foreign and domestic, that was observed during the Years of Lead. To break free from the weight of the past, Italy's intelligence apparatus must remain vigilant and active in all of these ventures and decisions. Italy had accomplished a number of these aforementioned recommendations, hence meeting the baseline expectations of a national-level intelligence apparatus of: "protect(ing) the lives and safety" of its citizens and "maintain(ing) the sovereignty" of the country, when populism in Italy rose exponentially first under Forza Italia and Silvio Berlusconi (Clinton White House Archives para 39). The rise of populist parties regardless of political ideology, in particular M5S and Lega Nord, threatens the future potential progress of the Italian

intelligence apparatus. These populist parties have strengthened their relationship with Moscow while criticizing NATO. Italy, if it desires to maintain an effective intelligence service that protects its citizenry from both oppression and attack, must refrain from the politicization of its intelligence structure under populism by resisting any stray from objectivity and the temptation to weaken its ties with NATO. Furthermore, if Italy fails in these endeavors, the history of its intelligence services could offer a great level of predictability for its future. It could be a future of weakness, inefficacy, and both internal and external sway.

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