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Rosella Dossi

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INVISIBLE
GOVERNMENT**



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Introduction

In 1980, a bomb exploded in the waiting room of Bologna train station, killing 85 people and injuring another 200. In December 1984, another bomb exploded on the so-called "Christmas" train en route from Florence to Bologna, killing another 15 people and injuring 267. In 1981, it was discovered that the highest levels of society, from generals to ministers of the republic, belonged to a secret Masonic Lodge intent on taking over state institutions. In 1990, Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti admitted to parliament that a secret organization, made up of military men and civilians, had existed since the 1950s, the purpose of which was to oppose, by all possible means, a government which included the Communist party (Bellu and D'Avanzo, 1991).

Post-war Italy has undergone bombings, attempted coups d'état and other illegal attempts at taking over state institutions. For the past twenty or thirty years, observers of the Italian political scene have postulated the existence of "*poteri occulti*" — covert powers — at work in Italy. Evidence of the existence of these "covert powers" has been collected by countless Parliamentary Commissions of Inquiry into specific events,¹ and documented in the findings of magistrates' inquiries into specific events (see for example Calderoni, 1986; De Lutiis, 1986; Pellegrini, 1993), and books written by scholars and investigative journalists uncovering secret documents such as classified material (De Lutiis, 1984; Flamigni 1988; Cipriani and Cipriani, 1991; Cipriani, 1994; De Lutiis, 1996; Flamigni 1996 among others). Then in 1991, for the first time, a Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry used the unspeakable words in a Report of the Massacres Commission to parliament: "*il Doppio Stato*" — the Dual State.²

This paper is the first attempt to provide a theoretical context for the existence of the Invisible Government (IG), also referred to as the Parallel or Dual State. The scope of the paper does not cover every aspect of the IG's workings over five decades.³ The paper formulates a hypothesis on the existence of an Invisible Government, and provides evidence of its existence based on the writings of Parliamentary Commissions of Inquiry and the proceedings of inquiries of Italian magistrates investigating terrorist events connected with the workings of the IG. The paper then goes on to explore several related issues, such as the reasons for the IG's existence; the tools used to reach its objectives; and the strategies applied, as well as issues of legitimacy and elitism.

The Invisible Government in the Literature

Few scholars have investigated the issue of an Invisible Government. The topic has been neglected by political science. A scholar wishing to investigate the subject is faced with a problem of documentation which, as Allum (1995, p. 473) pointed out, becomes also a problem of method. Documentation is hampered by official secrecy and the tendency on the part of the army and the police to regard investigations into their activities as hostile acts. Furthermore, on a theoretical level, scholars who delve into the topic cannot agree on a concept of a Dual State, or Invisible Government.

German scholar Emil Lederer, writing during the first decades of the twentieth century, identified the foundation of the Dual State in the "external role" of the State, i.e. in its being part of an anarchical society of states (De Felice, 1989, p. 495). Lederer saw the state on the one hand as the highest expression of society's organization, that is, the state based on law (the *Rechtsstaat*) and,

on the other hand, as part of the international system of states, or the State based on power (the *Machtsstaat*).

Another German scholar, Ernst Fraenkel (1941), applied the notion of a Dual State to the Nazi regime in Germany. He described the Nazi state as having two separate sides: one rational and normative, the Normative State (*Normenstaat*), while the other, the Prerogative State (*Massnahmenstaat*), was characterized by "unlimited arbitrariness" (p. xiii). According to Fraenkel, the Dual State was put in place to satisfy the requirement of German capitalism. This "organized, quasi-monopolistic capitalism..." needed on the one hand "state aid against its social enemies," while on the other hand it required legal order as a necessary precondition to "rational calculability of social chances, without which capitalism cannot exist" (pp. xiv, 172, 205). The Prerogative State, with its arbitrariness, satisfied the first requirement; the Normative State the second one. It followed that the Prerogative State applied to the political sphere, and the Normative State to the economic (206-7). In contrast to Lederer, Fraenkel identified the origins of the Dual State in domestic politics. Fraenkel's Dual State was not invisible; on the contrary, it was very much in the open. In fact, part of its effectiveness was based on its visibility, for instance through the imposition of the state of emergency (De Felice, 1989, p. 498).

These two lines of approach, domestic policy or foreign policy as the main propeller for the emergence of the Dual State, are not completely opposed to one another. The *Machtsstaat* tends to assume prominence when the State has to deal with an enemy. That the enemy may be internal, such as a Communist party, rather than external is not after all completely relevant (De Felice, 1989, p. 499).

Fraenkel's particular understanding of the working of a Dual State was then repostulated by the American neo-Marxist scholar Alan Wolfe (1977). The foundation of Wolfe's theory was based on the pre-supposition of the existence of an intrinsic contradiction within the capitalist state between liberalism and democracy, between the need for accumulation and that for legitimation. Wolfe did not address the issue of the composition of the Invisible Government. In his analysis, as with Lederer and Fraenkel, the same state offered a different "face" to different segments of society. But according to Wolfe, one "face," the democratic one, was there only for appearance, in order to legitimate the "substantial face," the one used for the benefit of a different class, the elite, for accumulation. In this, he was in agreement with Italian writer Enrico Nobis.

In 1955 Nobis had theorized the existence in Italy of an Invisible Government in which the power was in the hands of the "great monopolies of electricity, sugar, concrete" (Nobis, 1955, p. 7). The members of the elite at the head of these big monopolies consciously curtailed the voters' sovereignty by hiding and distorting reality (p. 141). According to Nobis, the State administration was inaccessible to the common people and was at any rate nothing more than a rubberstamp legitimizing big business's abuse of power (p. 183).

Nobis was the first to propose the notion of an Invisible Government that was not just the darker side of the legitimate one. For Lederer, Fraenkel, and later Wolfe, the agents of the State based on Law were the same as the Prerogative State, the State based on Power. Nobis was the first to see an agent of civil society which was actively part of the Invisible Government, namely the

general managers of big monopolies. For Nobis, not all the agents of the visible government are necessarily also part of the invisible one as well. His analysis has the shortcoming of including only big business among those agents of civil society who find a place in the Invisible Government.

Nobis's line of analysis was further developed by American writers David Wise and Thomas Ross. Taking the USA as the object of their study, they described the Invisible Government as a "loose, amorphous group of individuals and agencies drawn from many parts of the visible government" (1964, p. 3). The limitation of their analysis lay, once again, in stating that members of the Invisible Government were drawn only from the visible one, rather than from different segments of civil society as well, such as high finance, political parties, the secret services, and even the criminal world.

Bobbio (1980, pp. 181-203) addresses the issue from the point of view of the means used by an Invisible Government, namely secrecy, rather than from that of the composition of the IG. In fact it is not clear whether he perceives the secret government as composed of the same people as the legitimate one (like Fraenkel, Lederer, Wolfe and Wise and Ross), or by different agents (like Nobis).

Paolo Cucchiarelli and Aldo Giannulli (1997) introduced the important point of the existence of a "formal constitution" (*costituzione formale*) and a "de-facto constitution" (*costituzione materiale*). The Parallel State, as they prefer to call it, justifies its existence within the sphere of the de-facto constitution, since a formal constitution could not justify two different legal systems with contrasting ends. In the same way, the Parallel State cannot be reduced to any simple clandestine network, such as the Mafia or the

Red Brigades. In order to have a Parallel State, two pre-requisites should be satisfied: a) the clandestine network has to be both deeply and widely spread within the state institutions; and b) the covert agent must belong to the current system of power, not to an alternative one in opposition to it. That is, in the phenomenon of the Parallel State, a part of the dominant elite makes an illegitimate use of power not to subvert, but rather to preserve, the current system of power (p. 16).

Cucchiarelli and Giannulli also make another important point. The category of the Parallel State does not apply to countries where the constitution is a mere passive camouflage for a brutal dictatorship, such as many South American regimes. It only applies to a country where the formal constitution is in fact applied and operative, but where, in parallel to it, there is a de-facto constitution in use by an illegitimate power (p. 16).

Cucchiarelli and Giannulli give this very effective definition of a Dual State:

A dual state exists when a part of the constitutional elite, in order to preserve the current system [of power], forms a hidden power, with a principle of legitimation of its own — outside and in contra-position to that of the formal constitution — in order to permanently condition the political system through illegal methods, without going so far as to subvert the formal one, which partly maintains its efficacy (p. 18).

The two authors do not discuss the reasons why the Parallel State does not subvert the legitimate one. From this point of view, Wolfe's analysis is clearer. The legitimate system of power is not replaced by the covert one because the elite formed the view that a

democratic façade is indispensable in order to legitimate political power. South American states could pursue accumulation without having to be overtly concerned about legitimation. Italy's elite could not afford it. I shall return to this point later.

According to De Felice (1989, pp. 504-5), the most important element in an analysis of the Dual State is what he calls the "national-international nexus". The Dual State is born from an incapacity of the State to reconcile domestic policies with foreign policies, from the "double loyalty" to which he refers in the title of his paper. That is, in the case of an electoral victory by the PCI, it would have been impossible to reconcile the loyalty due to the *legitimate* government of the country — a Communist government — with the loyalty due to the international political bloc to which Italy has belonged since the end of the Second World War, i.e. NATO (p. 507).

Other writers, especially, but not only, Italians (see for example Willan, 1991), have extensively reported on the events that are the object of this paper. They touched on the fact that Italy was a country with "limited sovereignty," but without elaborating a full-blown theory. Nevertheless, their work was important, complementing that of scholars, especially in the view of the aforementioned difficulty of gathering research material.⁴

Experts on democracy have delved into the issues touched on by scholars investigating the phenomenon of Invisible Government. For example the issue of the relationship between *Rechtsstaat* and *Machtsstaat* has been explored by many political analysts, even if the issue is posed in slightly different terms. It is generally understood in terms of some issues, in a democratic State, being insulated from popular control (Smith, 1986; Held, 1989; Dryzek,

1996 among others). Such issues include defence, foreign affairs, industrial relations and the economy.

The Limits of Democracy

Smith (1986) argues that democratic control does not extend to the area of foreign and defence policies. This is because the state has to face not only inwards, towards the citizens, but also outwards, towards the international system. While each state possesses sovereignty, there is no sovereign body above them (the EU constitutes an exception). This makes the society of states anarchical. States must try to keep afloat in this environment. To do so, they must act without any regard for any wish their citizens might have to exercise democratic control. The state therefore assumes a "dual role" (pp. 193-95).⁵

The international system affects the behaviour of states not only in matters of military security, but with regard to the economy as well. States must compete in the international economic system. They need multinationals to invest in their countries in order to be able to collect taxation revenue. Increasingly, according to many analysts, states are not the most important and powerful actors in the international system. Non-state actors, such as multi-national corporations, are usurping that role (Smith, 1986, p. 197). States must compete to persuade big multinationals to invest in their countries. This means that taxation policies and industrial relations are increasingly taken out of democratic control as well (Dryzek, 1996, p. 37).⁶

According to neo-Marxist scholars, the dictates of capitalism put the same constraints on domestic policies that the international system puts on foreign and defence policies (Miliband, 1969;

Habermas, 1973; Poulantzas, 1973 and 1978; Offe, 1984). According to Habermas and Offe, democracy has been imposed on the capitalist state, which needs legitimation in order to maintain peace within society and to extract revenue. According to Ginsberg (1982), lack of democratic process would force the state to extract revenue by coercive means. Therefore, the system must secure the loyalty of one class, the proletariat, while, on the other hand, it acts systematically for the advantage of another social class, the elite (Habermas, 1973).

Many capitalist states manage to balance the two competing needs of legitimation and accumulation through a two-fold strategy. On the one hand, in order to retain public support, the State alleviates the worst effects of capitalism on the lower classes by developing the welfare state. On the other hand, the lower classes have been socialized into believing the welfare state works to their advantage. That is, the elite enjoys a cultural and ideological hegemony. Italian Communist leader Antonio Gramsci first developed this idea in the 1930s. Gramsci tried to explain the failure of the Marxist prediction that the capitalist state would fall because of its own contradictions by theorizing that in a capitalist society the social and political values of the elite enjoy an "ideological hegemony". These values are then promulgated through the mass media and the bourgeois educational system (Bellamy and Schecter, 1993).

According to Dryzek, the only alternative to the welfare state could very well be a dictatorship (1996, p. 30). I postulate that between the two there is an intermediate step, and that is the Invisible Government. The Dual State is already implicit in Smith's remark about the "dual role" of the State and the impermeability of certain areas of state activity to democracy. The Invisible

Government, in contrast, is overlooked when authors comment on an authoritarian government as the only alternative to the welfare state.

The Italian Experience

Prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall, Italy had the largest Communist party outside of the Communist world. At its peak in 1976, one Italian out of three voted for the Italian Communist Party (the PCI). Why, then, did the Italian state fail to pacify its working class through the welfare state and cultural hegemony?

The history of the evolution of Italy into a modern nation-state and a modern liberal democracy was completely different from — to mention perhaps the most important example — that of Britain. In fact I would like to argue that Italy's evolution into a liberal democracy has even now succeeded only partially (on this subject see, for example, Graziano, 1984). Italy's liberal experience instead has been short and patchy. A liberal parliament was established only in 1861. Prior to that, Italy had had almost no experience of being an independent centralized state.

Clientelism too was a serious impediment to the establishment of a modern liberal economy in a modern liberal democracy. The clientelistic relation between the baron and the peasants did not disappear with the advent of the new state. Rather, these relations were incorporated into it, thus creating a particular form of political clientelism, that is, favours in exchange for votes (Graziano, 1984).

Italy had not experienced an industrial revolution. It was an agricultural country in which the land was in the hands of a few

powerful barons. There was not the classic division into social classes present in an industrial state, namely the working class, pushing for democracy, and a capitalist class opposing it, with the already-mentioned outcome of a welfare state. Southern Italy during the nineteenth century was still a feudal society. Between the world wars, instead of a welfare state, the lower classes experienced the brutal repression of Mussolini's fascist regime. The repression experienced under fascist rule had the result of strengthening, rather than weakening, the PCI.⁷

By the end of the Second World War, on the one hand, the traditional elite and the monarchy had been totally discredited by their collaboration with the fascists. On the other hand, the Resistance movement, in which the PCI was by far the strongest component, had gained in prestige and influence. The situation, from the point of view of the ruling class, was becoming dangerous. When this happened in "peripheral" countries (Chile in 1973 is the best example), the USA did not hesitate in overthrowing the legitimate government and helping the establishment of a dictatorship.

But establishing a dictatorship in a country situated not on the "periphery" (Africa, South-east Asia, or South America), but in the heart of Europe, had its dangers. Therefore circumstances led to the half measure of the Invisible Government. The real power went underground.

Based on these premises, I would argue that, when in a representative democracy the dominant class — the elite — fails to maintain dominance through open and legitimate means, and that elite does not have the option of maintaining power through the establishment of an overtly authoritarian regime, the elite will resort

to the establishment of an invisible government, into which to channel the political power that has been in part taken away, secretly, from the legitimate government of the country.

Proof of the Existence of an Invisible Government in Italy

That such a thing as an IG existed (and still exists) in Italy has been ascertained beyond doubt. Glimpses of it had been seen by magistrates (those not belonging to the IG themselves) investigating the numerous massacres and coups d'état. Because of the intentionally fragmented nature of the parallel system, what was glimpsed was not the whole parallel system, but rather parts of it.

In 1974, Judge Gerardo D'Ambrosio — who in the 1990s, together with Judge Antonio Di Pietro, would be one of the members of the anti-corruption “Clean Hands” pool — investigated the Piazza Fontana massacre of 1969. The judge found that neo-fascist members of the extreme right-wing group *Ordine Nuovo* were guilty of having planted the bomb and of:

*... having set up, organized and directed an organization having as immediate aim the perpetration of an unlimited number of terrorist acts, progressively more serious, and such as to disrupt public order and put public safety in danger, and as the ultimate end the overthrow by violent means of the constitutional system of this State.*⁸

At the same time, Judge Tamburino was investigating the *Rosa dei Venti* attempted coup d'état of 1973.⁹ The magistrate accused the conspirators of:

... having promoted, set up and organized a secret association made up of civilians and military personnel, with the purpose of provoking an armed insurrection and, as a consequence, an illegal alteration of the Constitution and of the form of government through the intervention of the armed forces¹⁰. That is, they were availing themselves of various armed groups with hierarchic structure connected at the bottom end by "liaison officers" and at the top by the leaders, scattered in several different regions ... known by different names ... These groups were financed to provoke disorders, perpetrate terrorist attacks, commit violent and intimidatory acts, organize support groups; setting up their own intelligence service, establishing military and civilian hierarchies.¹¹

In October 1974 Judge Tamburino took the unprecedented step of arresting the Head of the secret service, General Miceli, accused of political conspiracy by means of association and of participating in a plot and of protecting, by lying, the plot itself. His arrest warrant mentioned:

... the existence of an organization which, while defined as a security one, in fact poses as an obstacle to particular changes in the internal and international political scene. An obstacle that, by limiting popular sovereignty and by using abnormal, illegal, secret and violent actions to fulfil its purposes, confers a subversive character on the organization itself.¹²

Further inroads in the detection of components of the IG were made with the discovery of the secret Masonic Lodge P2, the uncovering of which, with the realization that members of parliament and even serving ministers were affiliated to it, brought down the Forlani government in 1981. The parliament instituted a Commission of Inquiry into the affair. Three years — and hundreds of thousands

of documents — later, the Commission presented its findings to the parliament. The conclusions were sobering. The Commission found that the P2 was:

a complex structure exercising unlawful pressure on and interference in the most delicate and important sectors [of the country] with the aims both of personal gain and of increase of power, [in its turn] both personal power or for the whole Lodge. This diversified action, which upset the orderly functioning of the [state] institutions... involved the most disparate fields of our national life: from the political to the financial world, from publishing to ministries of the Government (Parlamento Italiano, 1984, Majority Report).

After the fall of the Berlin wall, Americans withdrew their support from Italian anticommunist forces. Little by little, more and more details were uncovered. In 1990, Prime Minister Andreotti admitted to parliament for the first time the existence of one of the secret organizations set up after the war following agreements between the CIA and Gladio, the Italian secret services (Bellu and D'Avanzo, 1991; Bettini, 1996; Cucchiarelli and Giannulli, 1997, sec. II).

It was in 1991 that the term "Parallel State" was used for the first time in parliament, with the final report of the Massacres Commission to Parliament by MP Colajanni:

*It appears, rather, that a number of criminal elements have found fertile ground within the State. The most conspicuous thread connecting the several cases is in fact the deviant behaviour of considerable sectors within the secret services (and more in general within the public administration).
[...]*

It is the phenomenon that political literature has for some time defined as "Dual State" or "Parallel State": a pathology of the de-facto Constitution, by which within the State itself a network of subjects performing criminal actions is built. This creates a sort of "anti-judicial system", mirror image of the legal one...¹³

The Strategy Used by the Invisible Government

The workings of the Invisible Government are complex. Furthermore, the fact that we are dealing with actions which by their own nature were top secret and of which even now not everything is known makes its study difficult.

Simplifying, the strategy of the IG from the end of the Second World War to the mid-1980s can be roughly divided into three periods:

- an establishing period, which lasted until the failed De Lorenzo coup d'état in 1964;
- the "Strategy of Tension", which lasted until the failed coups d'état in 1974; and
- the Plan for a Democratic Revival, lasting until the discovery of the Secret Masonic Lodge P2 and arguably, until the 1990s.

The Beginnings

Once again simplifying for the sake of clarity, the main actions taken during this establishment phase were:

- re-establishment of the Mafia and Masonry; blocking the purge against Fascists; re-establishment of the secret service in a subordinate position to the CIA;

- the establishment of several secret associations, comprising military personnel and civilians; and
- indoctrination of the members of the IG in non-orthodox warfare.

The establishment of the IG in Italy began at the end of the Second World War. With Nazism defeated, the eyes of the Americans turned towards the problem of Communism. Italy was the most troubled spot.

The Americans enlisted the help of all those groups in Italy that were not prepared to see a Communist party in government, regardless of whether this party had gained power legally, through democratically-held elections, or through a revolution. Already before the end of the war, the Americans helped to re-establish the Mafia in Sicily (Faenza and Fini, 1976, p. 132; Galli and Nannei, 1980, p. 16; Cipriani and Cipriani, 1991, pp. 5, 29-30; Cipriani, 1994; Massacres Commission). The two large islands of Sicily and Sardinia were strategically important, because they could be held fairly easily even in the event of the Communists gaining control of the mainland.

At the same time, the Americans and allied Italian politicians hindered, then stopped, the purge of fascist elements in the army, the police, the judiciary and the bureaucracy (Galli and Nannei, 1980, p. 21; De Lutiis, 1984, pp. 77-78; Ginsborg, 1989, pp. 120-21; Duggan, 1995, pp. 1-24). It was assumed that these elements would be of great importance in the fight against the enemy, as the "natural" enemies of Communism.

In addition, the Americans re-established Freemasonry, which had been disbanded by Mussolini, who had also confiscated their wealth. The Americans pressed the government into giving back the

wealth and real estate confiscated under Fascism. In return, Italian Masonry was asked to accept the establishment of American Lodges on Italian soil (Flamigni, 1996, pp. 382-83).

The Army, the Carabinieri, Freemasonry, the Mafia, together with some chosen politicians and businessmen and the Vatican were the initial building blocks in the establishment of the Invisible Government in Italy at the end of the Second World War.

The years immediately after the end of the war were the years of the so-called Communist psychosis. The Communists were perceived as a real threat to the existing power structure, as well as endangering Italy's position in the Western bloc. The Communists were waging a new type of war, and the West had to be prepared to fight back with the same weapons. The key word that defines this new type of conflict was secrecy.

The main concrete results obtained during the first phase were:

- the dismissal of the PCI from government in 1946. The PCI would have to wait 47 years before re-entering government, and this only after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the repudiation by the party of the Communist doctrine and subsequent transformation into the Partito Democratico della Sinistra (PDS), the Democratic Party of the Left;
- the defeat of the Popular Front (Socialist Party and Communist Party) at the crucial 1948 elections; and
- the split of the Leftist block, with the co-optation of the Socialist party into the coalition government.

Second Phase: The Strategy of Tension

The second phase can be considered the “mature” stage of the psychological war. The split among the Left had been achieved, but the PCI was steadily gaining momentum. The widespread student protests of 1968 and the extensive campaign waged in Italy by the trade unions in 1969, known as “the Hot Autumn,” convinced the IG of the need for an escalation of the secret conflict.¹⁴

It is important at this stage to highlight strong tensions within the IG during this second phase. The members of the IG were divided in two camps, named by Gianni Flamini as “the military coup party” and “the political coup party”. The former comprised the hawks in the IG: the hard-liners who thought that the solution to the Italian predicament was a military coup. They saw the Socialists in government as the first step to the Communists gaining power, and thought this could not be tolerated. This faction comprised the Italian Army, the Pentagon and extreme right-wing groups.

The latter faction thought their aim would be more effectively accomplished by more subtle means. What was needed was not a successful coup, but the threat of a coup d'état, designed to keep the Italian public under “Chilean Shock,” that is, by constantly reminding people of what would happen to a country that elected a communist regime into power.

This period saw two major campaigns, one in 1970 and one in 1973-74, comprising three major attempted coups (and a few aborted ones that never reached the pages of major newspapers, but which were revealed by those involved) and countless terrorist

actions. These included major bombings, when innocent bystanders were killed and even more injured:

- the 1970 campaign, with multiple bombings culminating with the Piazza Fontana bombing in Milan in 1969, in which 12 people were killed, and the Borghese coup d'état in 1971; and
- the 1973-74 campaign, with two major bombings, the Italicus train massacre and the Piazza della Loggia massacre in Brescia, culminating in two separate attempted coups d'état: the Rosa dei Venti coup in 1973 and the Sogno "white" coup in 1974.

During this phase, the IG made extensive use of manipulation of right-wing terrorism (Flamini, 1981, 1982, 1983a, 1983b, 1985a, 1985b; De Lutiis, 1984, 1998; Cipriani and Cipriani, 1991; Willan, 1991; Barbacetto, 1993; Flamigni, 1996; Massacres Commission). But the coups were not meant to succeed. According to Italian Philosophy Professor Emanuele Severino, terrorist violence was purposely administered in small doses. He commented that "terrorism does not unleash a destructive power capable of overthrowing our social system, but enough to maintain it under constant pressure". Terror increases people's desire for security at the expense of their desire for change. Because of it, the party that suffered most from terrorism was the PCI, "because it proposes the renewal of society in the most radical and unpredictable way".¹⁵ This is the strategy of tension.

Third Phase: The Plan for a Democratic Revival

1974 signaled a change in strategy on the part of the US. The most grossly dictatorial European regimes, such as those in Greece and Portugal, lost American support, and subsequently fell. In Italy, this change of direction meant the abandonment of the strategy of tension in favour of more subtle action. The new aim was the

institution of a presidential republic in the American style, with stronger powers given to the executive; a parliament with two major democratic parties instead of the countless ones present at the time; tame trade unions; and subtle control of the press. The document describing the Plan was the “Plan for a Democratic Revival” (Piano di Rinascita Democratica, 1984).

The highlights of this phase of implementation of the Plan were:

- the further establishment of the P2 as a secret organization rather than a Masonic Lodge. The marginalization of military officers in the Lodge, with a concomitant growth in importance of members from the finance world, the media, the bureaucracy;
- attempt to take over state institutions by infiltration, especially
 - into the bureaucracy, especially the ministry of foreign trade;
 - into the media – buying up the major Italian media groups (for example Rizzoli- *Corriere della Sera*); and
 - into political parties
- growth of corruption;
- manipulation of left-wing terrorism (especially the Red Brigades).

The kidnapping and murder of statesman Aldo Moro in 1979 has been linked to the activities of the IG. Moro’s assessment of the situation in which Italy found itself at the time convinced him that political stability could be achieved only by seconding into government the second largest party in the country, the PCI. This conviction cost him his life. He was kidnapped by the Red Brigades on the same day that Andreotti was to present his government to parliament, a government which, for the first time since 1947, included the PCI. Moro was then killed 54 days later. It has come to light relatively recently that the Red Brigades were infiltrated and manipulated by the secret services (Scarano and De Luca, 1985;

Flamigni, 1988; Willan, 1990; Cipriani and Cipriani, 1991, ch. 9; Flamigni 1996, ch. 8).

Characteristics of the IG

The Power Structure

The Invisible Government is not elected, but self-appointed. Access to the Invisible Government did not come automatically from occupying a high position in the legal government. Politicians had to be cleared by the CIA according to their “commitment to the democratic ideal”.¹⁶ For this reason the members of the Invisible Government, no matter of what party, were often referred to as the “Atlantic Party”. Sometimes even the Prime Minister, the Defence Minister or the President of the Republic were not admitted to the “Club,” while other very junior politicians were (Bellu and D’Avanzo, 1991, p. 127).¹⁷

This government body does away with those democratic mechanisms that obstruct or hinder the arbitrary or illegal exercise of power, such as the subordination of the executive to the legislative power, the ultimate accountability of parliament, in its exercise of legislative power, to a Constitutional Court, a judiciary independent of the political authority. On the contrary, its power structure is pyramidal and unitary.

At the beginning of the IG, the co-ordination of the various elements was the competence of the secret services. Following the scandal of the failed De Lorenzo coup d’état in 1964, the secret services were reformed. The IG decided to create an *ad hoc* agency to coordinate actions. This agency was the secret Masonic Lodge P2.

The Masonic Lodge P2

The P2 was an association with a pyramidal hierarchical structure. There was an absence of horizontal relations, i.e. among brothers of the same grade, who did not know each other. Instead, all relations between the Grand Master, Gelli, and the members were vertical (Parlamento Italiano, 1984, p.49).

One cannot really understand the purpose of the P2 without bearing in mind the nature of its membership. During the first phase, the membership was characterized by the presence of a very high proportion of top military officials. In the P2 membership list there was a total of 195 military officers, of whom 92 were generals and colonels (P2 Commission, p. 77).¹⁸ In total the membership list, including State banks and State companies, contained the names of 422 members of the public administration (Parlamento Italiano, 1984, p. 106 ff.). It shows a “penetrating and capillary presence” in the Lodge in all its sectors. This number included 128 public managers, 4 cabinet ministers, 3 under-secretaries of state, 10 bank presidents and 10 bank general managers. The list also included 119 members in the Ministries of Finance and Treasury. Another Ministry heavily infiltrated was that of the Interior, which could count 9 of its officials among the P2 members, including 4 Chiefs of Police and 3 Prefects (p. 79). The P2 lists contained the names of 16 magistrates currently in service and 3 magistrates already retired (p. 110).¹⁹ Other P2 members have testified to the presence of Masonry in the Vatican. According to P2 member General Fulberto Lauro, “among P2 members there are Cardinals and Bishops as well” (P2 Commission, Stenographic Reports, Vol. VII, p. 89).²⁰ The members’ list included also 59 parliamentarians from every political party except the Communist and the Radical parties, among them 5 ministers or former ministers (Calderoni, 1986, p. 132-33).²¹ Several witnesses

testified to Gelli's close relationship with top-level politicians, such as Andreotti, Cossiga, Leone, Fanfani, Saragat, Piccoli, Forlani.²²

As noted, the power structure was unitary; an example of this is the Grand Master Gelli's relations with respect to the secret services. There is evidence to prove Gelli's position at the head of the secret services. When the services needed to gather information about the Lodge or about single members, they would ask Gelli to prepare the reports. This happened on several occasions. One such occasion was when the Bologna magistrates investigating the Italicus massacre of August 1974 asked the services for a report on Gelli and on the Masonry (Evidence of Colonel Viezzier to Rome Public Prosecutor, 25.5.1981, in Calderoni, 1986, pp. 123-24). The same happened during the Moro kidnapping. On that occasion General Grassini, the head of SISDE, the domestic secret service, passed on to the head of counter-espionage, Dr Cioppa — another P2 member — notes detailing how to conduct the investigations. These notes were compiled by Gelli himself (Calderoni, 1986, p. 124).

Following the massacre on 2 August 1980 at the Bologna station, the same Cioppa had been asked by the magistrates to examine the personal file of an army officer heavily implicated in the Strategy of Tension. Cioppa instead contacted Gelli and went to the latter's hotel in order to receive orders from him about what to do. Cioppa later confessed that "Gelli told me that we had got everything wrong and that we had to look for the people responsible outside Italy". He also confessed that he used to receive his orders from his superior, General Grassini, "on little notes, written by hand in pencil by Gelli, and from there I would develop my investigations" (Calderoni, 1986, p. 124).²³ Gelli's behaviour is quite obviously that of a person in charge.

According to Bologna's magistrates, Gelli was in a position of "dominus" in the secret service. This is because the position in the hierarchy that was relevant was not that which the subjects occupied in the visible government, but that of the invisible one. In the latter, Gelli was Venerable Master, whose will the "brothers" could not question, even if they happened to be the head or deputy head of the secret service. Their "obligations towards Masonry clashed with their obligations towards the State" (quoted in Calderoni, 1986, p. 125).

An Elitist Structure

My hypothesis of the existence and working of the Invisible Government has elite theory as one of its bases. That is, it presupposes the existence of a class believing itself more suited than the rest of the population to rule. This premise takes us into the debate about "where power lies". Is power spread out among many different and competing agents, as Dahl argues, or is it in the hands of an elite — or several competing elites — as elite theorists argue (Mill, Dornhoff, Mosca, Pareto, Miliband, and Lukes, among others).

This debate is far from resolved, and both camps have solid arguments. What this paper argues is that — regardless of whether one or more elites really exist and really exercise considerable power — the persons involved in the IG do believe that they constitute an elite and that they ought to rule. For example, the founding document of the Montecarlo Lodge Masonic Executive Committee — connected with the P2 and led by the P2 Grandmaster, Gelli — reads: "Freemasonry is the association most qualified to govern. If it does not govern, therefore, it misses its very *raison d'être*". It then states that, in order to reach Freemasonry's ultimate goal, "it is obviously necessary to obtain the most suitable

instrument: power ... The brothers of the Executive Masonic Committee must therefore study, analyze power, in order to conquer it, exercise it, hold on to it, increase it..." (Flamigni, 1996, p. 361; Galasso, 1993, pp. 124-25).

Another interesting example is constituted by the two documents at the basis of the third phase of the IG: the "Memorandum on the Political Situation in Italy," and the "Plan for a Democratic Revival" (both in P2 Commission, *Allegati alla Relazione*, 1984 pp. 187-94). The first document assesses the multifaceted crisis which Italy was facing at the beginning of the 1970s. The moral crisis, according to the document, was due to "the mistake by the more radical and lay components of our society in believing that a country with a history like ours *could be mature enough* to be suddenly elevated to a north-European level..." (pp. 187-94. My italics). The obvious implications are that Italy should be led by those who, on the contrary, are fit to rule. According to the documents, one of the consequences of the political crisis was the "strong tendency of each single citizen to a more active participation in public life," which was seen as a negative point.²⁴ According to the memorandum, history teaches that the usual outcome of this kind of crisis is a dictatorship (such as Italy in 1922, Russia in 1917, Germany in 1933 and Spain in 1935). The only way to avoid this dictatorial outcome (either Fascist or Communist) and instead preserve "freedom and democracy" is the emergence of a strong leader (such as the figure of General De Gaulle) and the "*presence of an extremely highly qualified administrative, political, economic and military leadership* — such as in France during the 1958 crisis" (My italics). It was therefore left to "*men of good faith*" to prepare a plan, which would address the real causes for the threefold crisis mentioned above, and would allow Italy to remain part of the Western world, of the "*substantial democracies* (and not only pluralistic) based on freedom of choice, both economic

and political, of each citizen and on a precise equilibrium between freedom and social justice...*on the American model...*" (My italics).

This document was the preamble to the "Plan for a Democratic Revival". The plan set the basis for the third phase of the IG, and theorizes an institutional and bloodless coup, rather than a military one as during the second phase where selected men would have infiltrated and taken over key state institutions. According to the plan,

Primary objective and essential pre-supposition of the operation is the constitution of a club (of Rotarian nature given the heterogeneity of the participants) where entrepreneurs and financial operators, representatives of liberal professions, public administrators and magistrates would be represented at the highest levels, plus very few and selected politicians, not more than 30 or 40 (p. 196).

It is quite evident from these examples that the members of the IG thought of themselves as an elite and believed in their right/duty to govern.

The Issue of Legitimacy

Cucchiarelli and Giannulli (1997) make the important point that both a formal constitution and a de-facto constitution exist in a State with parallel governments. Members of the IG have to abide by both. This brings about a clash of loyalties. The de-facto constitution is in strong opposition to the former, according to which the acts perpetrated by members of the IG are illegal and criminal.

It is important to note that the de-facto constitution does not apply to a single State. Rather, it is transnational. In the eyes of the members of the IG, this constitution overrides any formal

constitution in use in the particular country. Time and again members brought to justice defended themselves by stating that their activities were not criminal, but perfectly legitimate. For example, during the trial for his involvement in the Borghese coup d'état, the head of secret service General Miceli declared that

There is and always has existed a certain very secret organization, which the highest authorities of the State know about. Seen from outside, by the layman, this organization could be incorrectly interpreted. It could appear to be something outside official policy. [Its activities were] fully institutional [although] far removed from information-gathering (quoted in De Lutiis, 1984, p. 129. My emphasis).

Another of the plotters arrested, Lieutenant Amos Spiazzi, always insisted to Judge Tamburino that their activity was not subversive, but perfectly legitimate. Its aim was to protect institutions against Marxism. The American officer who activated him with a phone call used the appropriate password, the military code "Stanag" and the five-figure secret alert number for classified actions in use for NATO operations, secrecy classification: "Cosmic" (Barbacetto, 1993, p. 77).

Orlando, second-in-command of MAR (*Movimento Armato Rivoluzionario* — one of the many secret organizations active on the territory at the time) declared:

I want to reiterate that we strongly believed in what we were doing and that our group had a very clear connotation: we were strongly anti-Communist and we were anyhow persons one could have called gentlemen. Our group was inserted in a larger context, had the full support of institutional bodies, that is, of members of the Carabinieri and the Army, and

had as an end to make sure Communism would not seize power in Italy... (Archive Massacres Commission, quoted in Cucchiareli and Giannulli, 1997, p. 332).

Even the former President of the Republic, Francesco Cossiga, heavily implicated in the scandal surrounding the uncovering of the secret structure Gladio at the beginning of the 1990s, defended himself by reminding critics that in fact there was a war going on. It was not declared, but it was fought by any means. It is thus thanks to defences such as Gladio that Italy had not fallen “into the whirlpool of dictatorship, into the disaster of Communism” (Bellu and D’Avanzo, 1991, pp. 259-60).

The claim to the legitimacy of this de-facto constitution is that the preservation of the Western system of power is of the utmost importance, and overrides any different choice the citizens of a country might decide to exercise. A parallel can be made with the Brezhnev Doctrine adopted during the USSR’s suppression of the democratic revolution in Prague, which stated that the interests of the whole of the Warsaw Pact nations overrode the interests of single nations belonging to the Pact, and that a socialist nation had the right to save another from “world imperialism” (LaFeber, 1985, p. 258).

The De-facto Constitution

If a written de-facto constitution exists at all, this consists of the several USA and NATO documents written on the subject, such as National Security Council (NSC) resolutions. That Italy was seen by the NSC as the most troubled spot in the anti-Communist war is indicated by the fact that the very first resolution was devoted to Italy. NSC 1/1, a top-secret report issued on 17 November 1947, was

entitled "The Position of the United States with Respect to Italy" (quoted in Willan, 1991, p. 20).

NSC Document 1/2 dated 10 February 1948 (in De Lutiis, 1996, p. 6) dealt with the hypothesis that Italy would succumb to Communist domination following an armed insurrection or other *illegal* initiatives. It urged "actively combating communist propaganda in Italy by an effective US information program *and by all other practicable means*" (quoted in Willan, 1991, p. 32. My italics).

A score of other NSC resolutions set down the actions to be undertaken in the event of the Communists being on the verge of gaining power "totally or partially, by legal or illegal means" (NSC Document, 19.1.1961, "US policy towards Italy", quoted in Cipriani and Cipriani, 1991, p. 43).

NSC Document 1/3 dated 8 March 1948 (in De Lutiis, 1996, p. 6) was entitled "Position of the USA towards Italy in light of participation of the Communists in government by legal means". It recommended that the US should as a matter of priority take "further measures designed to prevent the Communists from winning participation in the government". This document expressly stated that a victory of the Popular Front (in 1948 the PCI and the PSI fought the elections jointly as the Popular Front) would jeopardize the interests of the US in the Mediterranean area. The event would also have serious repercussions in the rest of Europe and the Middle East. According to the document the interests of US security were immediately and seriously threatened by the possibility of a victory of the Popular Front, dominated by the PCI.²⁵ This document forms the premise for the Demagnetize Plan discussed below.

The NSC document dated 8 March 1948 stated that “from now on up to the Italian elections in April, the US must, as an immediate priority, undertake any measure in order to avoid Communist participation in government as a result of an electoral victory” (USFR, 1948, vol. III, p. 777, quoted in Faenza and Fini, 1976, p. 249). Under the NSC paper 10/2, 18 June 1948 (at the time of the Italian political elections) Truman authorized the CIA to handle covert operations.²⁶

Secret NATO protocols committed the secret services of the signatory countries to work to prevent the Communist Party from coming to power. Italy signed in 1949. One protocol provided for the creation of an unofficial organization “charged with guaranteeing Italy’s international alignment within the Western Block by any means, *even if the electorate were to show a different inclination*” (De Lutiis, 1984, p. 126; Willan, 1991, p. 27).

A top secret Memorandum of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff dated 14 May 1952 reveals the existence of a plan code-named “Demagnetize,” designed to reduce the influence of the Communist Party over governments and trade unions in Italy and France so as to reduce the risk of Communism becoming established in either country and thus *damaging the interests of the United States*. A series of “political, para-military and psychological operations” were to be employed. The Italian and the French governments must not be made aware of the plan’s existence as it “may interfere with their national sovereignty” (Roberto Faenza, 1978, *Il Malaffare*, quoted in Willan, 1991, pp. 27-8). “Demagnetize” was a plan of “permanent anti-Communist offensive”. This was the core of the plan:

the ultimate objective of the plan is the reducing of the Communist parties' strength, material resources and influence on the French and Italian governments and in particular on trade unions, as well as the attraction it exercezes over Italian and French citizens, so as to greatly reduce the danger of communism taking roots in Italy and France, this way damaging US interests in the two countries. The limiting of power of the Communists in Italy and France is a priority goal, and it has to be achieved at any cost... (De Lutiis, 1984, p. 63; Bellu and D'Avanzo, 1991, pp. 137-38).

The implementation of these measures had tragic results for the democratic life of the Italian Republic.

The Ultimate Objective of the Invisible Government

Americans justify their actions in setting up an IG in Italy by saying that democracy has be to saved at any cost. Communism is the negation of democracy. Even if the PCI were to gain power by legal elections, there was no assurance that they would not, once in government, restrict personal and economic freedoms, given their subservience to the USSR. Democracy had to be saved at any cost. Those people who voted for the PCI did not really understand what their action implied. A fight by any means against Communism was also for their benefit.

This is the official line. However, official documents consulted, secret and otherwise, time and again refer to — rather than the defence of democracy — “the interests of the United States” (see for example Supplement B, 1984). Ultimately, the US interest was for markets to remain open. A communist regime would have closed the Italian market to American goods. If Italy fell to the

Communists, other countries in the Mediterranean area would have followed.

Are the interests of American capitalists the same as the interests of democracy? Once again the official answer is yes. There is a very close relationship between economic and ideological or political considerations in the formulation of US foreign policy (Wilson, 1978, p. 281). The US wished for a new order, based on liberal principles (Herring, 1978, p. 112). According to the Americans, democracy and capitalism are very closely related, and they cannot exist except in conjunction with each other.²⁷

However many scholars argue that democracy and liberalism, rather than being closely related, are in fact antithetical. And when the two clash, it is normally democracy that comes out the loser. Democracy had been imposed on the elites, who need it for legitimacy purposes. A top secret document, dated 18 March 1970, concerning special operations in "host" countries, signed by General Westmoreland, which fell into the hands of the P2 Commission tells the story:

[...]

2. Need for Political Flexibility

The U.S. Army, in line with other U.S. Agencies, is not committed irrevocably to the support of any particular government in the host country for a variety of reasons:

[...]

Such factors may create a situation in which U.S. interests require changes of governmental direction

enabling the host country to obtain more constructive benefit from U.S. assistance or guidance.

While joint counterinsurgency operations are usually and preferably conducted in the names of freedom, justice and democracy, *the U.S. government allows itself a wide range of flexibility in determining the nature of a regime deserving its full support.*

[...]

Nevertheless, *U.S. concern for world opinion is better satisfied if regimes enjoying U.S. support observe democratic processes, or at least maintain a democratic façade.* (Supplement B, 1984, p. 229)

Democracy is thus a façade. The real aim is the perpetuation of a system of power.

Were the interests of the Italian branch of the IG the same as those of the USA? The IG was the tool put in place to save liberalism as a political institution. But liberalism in Italy was not present to any significant degree. What was the Italian component of the IG trying to save at such cost to the country? An answer comes to mind when remembering that what is important is not liberalism — or capitalism — *per se*, but the fact that liberalism is the instrument through which the elite in mature liberal democratic countries achieves capital accumulation. When the rationale for the IG is formulated this way — that is, as the answer to the necessity of achieving capital accumulation and maintaining power — the formula fits the Italian predicament. The institutions used by the Italian ruling class to achieve accumulation were clientelism, Mafia, corruption. The PCI was in fact an enemy of the mafioso, corrupt and clientelist practices as much as it was of capitalism.²⁸

Conclusions

Since the end of the Second World War, democracy in Italy has been undermined by sectors of its society — led by the Western “superpower” — who thought that the Italian Communist Party should be prevented from gaining power at any cost. In the process, these “covert powers” killed, terrorized, manipulated, bribed — in other words undermined the very institution they claim they wanted to preserve, democracy — so that Italy’s place within the “Free World” could be maintained.

The fall of the Berlin Wall a decade ago spelled the end of the Communist Bloc. As a result, the PCI dissolved, thus removing the main motivation for the creation of the Invisible Government. A corruption clean-up of large proportions, the dissolution of the old parties and a new electoral law saw the renovation of the Italian political landscape. The old guard was put aside and, since 1994, two political blocs — centre-left and centre-right — have contested the elections for the right to govern the country. Both blocs have already had a spell in government, so that the country experienced, for the first time since the end of the Second World War, alternation in government. Is this the end of the Dual State?

If the reason given by the people implicated in the IG is true, then we should have seen from the mid 1990s a disappearance, whether gradual or drastic, of the phenomenon. If the IG, on the other hand, is the mechanism used to perpetuate a system of power threatened not by Communism, but by grassroots democracy (in fact, even by a “thin” democracy exercised only by a vote for the chosen party) then in all probabilities the IG would still be there, maybe after having undergone a sort of genetic mutation to adapt to changed

circumstances. After all, elites still want to pursue accumulation free of democratic control, and common citizens still want to curb the power of the elites and maintain a certain democratic standard. Is Italy's second Republic a truly regenerated polity?

The messages sent by the new republic are not univocal. On the one hand, for the past six years Italy has had a sort of bipolar system, with alternation in government between a supposedly moderate right and a moderate left. The big corruption clean-up has — if only partially — cleared the air of the corruption that has permeated the life of the country since unification. Privatisations have diminished the opportunities for clientelistic practices. The veil of secrecy covering some of the misdeeds of the Dual State has been lifted, even if only partially.

On the other hand, unfortunately, there are signs that lead to a less positive interpretation. The magistrates belonging to the anti-corruption "Clean Hands" pool have warned the country that the corruption clean-up is losing momentum and that, of the thousands of people incarcerated for corruption, only four remain in jail. Andreotti, arguably the main actor of the Invisible Government, who had been accused of collusion with the Mafia and of having commissioned at least two murders, has recently been cleared of any charge, is back on the political scene, and has launched the idea of a re-unification of the many small parties born from the dissolution of the DC into a "great Centre".²⁹ Also still very much present and active on the political scene is Cossiga, one of the most compromised politicians of the First Republic. And the closest the Invisible Government came to succeeding in implementing the Plan for a Democratic Revival was not during the First Republic, but with the first government of the Second Republic, led by P2 Masonic Brother Silvio Berlusconi, P2 membership card number 1861.³⁰

These are all signals that the IG has not exhausted its function, but is still alive and well. The implication is that the conditions that brought about its creation are still present, and did not evaporate with the disappearance of the PCI.

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ENDNOTES

¹ Main Parliamentary Commissions of Inquiry:

Commissione parlamentare d'inchiesta sugli eventi del giugno-luglio 1964 (Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on the Events of June-July 1964);

Commissione parlamentare d'inchiesta sul caso Sindona e sulle responsabilità politiche ed amministrative ad esso eventualmente connesse (Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on the Sindona Case and on the Political and Bureaucratic Responsibilities connected to the Case);

Commissione Antimafia (Antimafia Commission);

Commissione parlamentare d'inchiesta sulla loggia massonica P2 (Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on the Masonic Lodge P2);

Commissione parlamentare d'inchiesta sul terrorismo in Italia e sulla mancata individuazione dei responsabili delle stragi (Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on Terrorism in Italy and on the non-Detection of those Responsible for the Massacres);

Commissione parlamentare d'inchiesta sulla strage di Via Fani, sul sequestro e l'assassinio di Aldo Moro e sul terrorismo in Italia (Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on the Via Fani Massacre, on the Kidnapping and Murder of Aldo Moro and on Terrorism in Italy).

² Final report of the works of the Massacres Commission during the XI legislature by MP Napoleone Colajanni, quoted in Cucchiarelli and Giannulli, 1997, p. 223.

³ This constitutes part of a larger project, which resulted in a PhD thesis, "Italy's Invisible Government: Overt Democracy, Covert Authority," submitted in April 2001 to the School of Graduate Studies at the University of Melbourne.

⁴ For example Faenza and Fini (1976) fought a lengthy battle with the competent US agencies in order to obtain sensitive information under the US freedom of information law.

⁵ On the same subject see also Dryzek, 1996, pp. 10-12, 37. For a discussion on national and international constraints on the state, see also Held, 1989, pp. 148-9, 229-35.

⁶ In order to facilitate this operation, the State tends to assign functions that can be the subject of strong resentment in the working class to institutions outside political control, such as the Bundesbank and, among supra-national economic institutions, the IMF (Dryzek, 1996, p. 37).

⁷ According to Rokkan, the impact of the owner-worker cleavage on the stability of democracy — translated in Italian politics into the willingness of the workers to join the Italian Communist Party — depended on whether or not the parties backed by the workers (the PCI, but also the PSI) were repressed or incorporated into a ruling elite (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). Rokkan also theorized that in countries where the ruling regime repressed trade unions as well as worker-supported parties, the working class "continued to be ideological and more susceptible to the influence of the Russian Revolution" (p. 100). This comment, too, fits the Italian experience where all unions except the fascist one were abolished.

⁸ Proceedings of Inquiry of Milan examining magistrate Dr Gerardo D'Ambrosio, quoted in Flamini, 1983b, p. 575, my translation. All translations of original sources, unless otherwise specified, are mine.

⁹ Magistrates belonging to the IG had an important role to play in this strategy. On the one hand they had to make sure that "reds" were incriminated for the terrorist acts. On the other hand, if by misfortune members of the right-wing groups who really perpetrated the massacres were brought to justice, they had to have them found not guilty and released. The same would happen if members of the police, Carabinieri or secret service were arrested for their role in covering up. The level of harassment, sabotage and intimidation (and sometimes death) to

which the magistrates loyal to the State were subjected because of their commitment in seeking justice would deserve a whole thesis. See for example Barbacetto, 1993.

¹⁰ In fact, as I shall explain later, these coups d'état were not really meant to succeed, but simply to apply pressure on State institutions.

¹¹ Proceedings of Inquiry of Padua examining magistrate Dr Giovanni Tamburino, quoted in Flamini, 1983b, p. 608.

¹² Proceedings of Inquiry of Padua examining magistrate Dr Giovanni Tamburino, quoted in De Lutiis, 1984, p.113.

¹³ Final report of the works of the Massacres Commission during the XI legislature by MP Colajanni, quoted in Cucchiarelli and Giannulli, 1997, p. 223.

¹⁴ Trade unions, banned by Mussolini, were re-introduced after the dictator's demise.

¹⁵ Interview with *Corriere della Sera*, 16.1.1985, quoted in Willan, 1991, pp. 14-15.

¹⁶ An official security clearance, called "Security clearance of loyalty to NATO" was indispensable in order not only to become a Minister, but even a senior public servant or a scientist working in State scientific research centres. These security clearances were the duty of a special office under the authority of the Defence Chief of Staff, called Ufficio Sicurezza del Patto Atlantico (USPA), Atlantic Pact Security Office. General De Lorenzo to the "Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry into the Events of June-July 1964", Minority Report, p. 69, quoted in De Lutiis, 1984, p. 127. In fact there are two USPA offices, one in the Ministry of Defence, and one in the Ministry of Interior.

¹⁷ When, in 1990, the Gladio scandal exploded and prominent member of the DC Giovanni Leone found out that many others with less seniority were informed by the secret service of its existence while he, former Prime Minister and former President of the Republic, had always been kept in the dark, he was terribly upset. "Treated like a President of shit", he complained (Bellu and D'Avanzo, 1991, p. 127).

¹⁸ Even more worrying is the realization of the functions fulfilled by these senior officers. For example Admiral Torrisi was Navy Staff Officer during 1977-80, and then Defence Staff Officer during 1980-81; General Grassini was head of the SISDE (Domestic Secret Service) from November 1977 to July 1981; General Santovito was head of SISMI (Military Intelligence) from January 1978 to August 1981; General Picchiotti was deputy general commander of the Carabinieri during 1974-75; General Palumbo was commander of the Carabinieri "Pastrengo" division in Milan, and subsequently deputy General commander of the Carabinieri; General Miceli was head of SID (Secret Service) from 1970 to 1974; General Musumeci was general secretary of SISMI together with General Santovito; General Giudice was general commander of Revenue Police during 1974-78; General Giannini occupied the same position during 1980-81. The generals of Operation Solo (Generals Allavena, Bittoni, Romolo Dalla Chiesa, Picchiotti) could all be found in the P2. Calderoni (Ed), 1986, p. 17. In fact The P2 Commission commented: "As can be seen at a glance, the membership reveals a map of the highest levels of military power, with individuals who have often played a central role in particularly significant moments of the recent history of our country, as well as in events of a subversive nature" (P2 Commission, p. 77).

¹⁹ The lodge had heavily infiltrated the *Consiglio Superiore della Magistratura*, the Judiciary's organ of self-government, and had enrolled a considerable number of Presidents of the Court. The infiltration was weak in the Office of Public Prosecutor and in the Supreme Court (p. 114).

²⁰ P2 member Pier Carpi said that the Masonic Lodge operating in the Vatican was called "Lodge Ecclesia". According to him, this lodge operated in the Vatican beginning from 1971, and more than 100 Cardinals, Bishops and other high-ranking prelates belonged to it (L'Europeo, 12.12.1987, quoted in Flamini, 1996, p. 304).

²¹ The membership list contained the names of probably less than half the total membership. The Bologna Magistrates therefore held as evidence of involvement with Gelli and the P2 the fact of many politicians' names having been found in Gelli's personal diary. The latter contained telephone numbers (some so private that he could not have been able to obtain them except from the holder) and personal addresses of many well-known politicians. Prominent among them were the names of Andreotti (three different telephone numbers), Cossiga, Piccoli.

²² A secret service report dated 19.3.1974 gave as certain the fact that Gelli had "relations with Andreotti and other members of his faction, with Saragat, Fanfani and Bucciarelli Ducci" (Calderoni, 1986, p. 132). According to General Grassini, Gelli "had relations with top level politicians and showed he was always perfectly informed about the political situation, so much so that sometimes he would anticipate some events. (Evidence of General Grassini, to the Bologna Public Prosecutor, quoted in Calderoni, (Ed), 1986, p. 132). The deputy head of the Office of Special Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior, Giovanni Fanelli, testified that "I did not have any reason to doubt that Gelli had relations with Andreotti and Cossiga. I know that with absolute certainty because I went with Gelli to some of their meetings". (Evidence of Fanelli to Rome Public Prosecutor, 6.3.1981, quoted in Calderoni, (Ed), 1986, p. 132). For further evidence of witnesses, see pp. 132-33.

²³ For more examples, see Calderoni, 1986, pp. 123-25

²⁴ In this the document resembles the report to the Trilateral Commission by Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki, 1975.

²⁵ A victory would put the PCI in government and then the Communists, following a path common in Eastern Europe, could gain total control of government and transform Italy into a totalitarian state subservient to Moscow. (De Lutiis, 1996, p. 6). In conclusion, in the event of the PCI participating in government, the USA would: "a) (omissis); b) (omissis); c) (start a joined military plan with selected nations; d) supply the Italian anticommunist clandestine movement with economic and financial help; e) oppose Italy joining the United Nations". The document also specified that "militarily, the possibility that the USSR could have access to military bases in Sicily and Southern Italy would represent a direct threat to our security in the entire Mediterranean area." (NSC 1/3 pp. 775-79, in Acts of Massacres Commission, quoted in Cipriani and Cipriani, 1991, p. 42. Point c) quoted by De Lutiis, 1996, pp. 6-7).

²⁶ They included: a) blocking of Left forces in the West (especially in Italy and France) in 1948; b) assistance to anti-Communist forces in the Eastern Bloc (Bernstein, 1978, p. 198). This NSC paper created the Office of Policy Coordination within the CIA, which would be in charge of such covert actions (Cipriani and Cipriani, 1991, note 1, p. 12. De Lutiis calls it Office of Special Projects). Covert actions included "direct preventive actions, including sabotage, anti-sabotage, measures of demolition and evacuation; subversion against hostile states, including assistance to resistance clandestine groups, guerrilla-war groups, liberation of refugees, assistance to local anticommunist elements in threatened countries belonging to the free world. [...] These operations do not include armed conflicts by acknowledged military forces". (Directive of the Executive Secretary of the Office of Special Projects to the NSC, 18.6.1948, pp. 2-3, in De Lutiis, 1996, p. 8).

²⁷ They believe that democracy cannot survive without a global market and raw materials fully open to all on the basis of equal opportunity. If other countries were to create closed trading blocs, the US could survive only through massive intervention into the US economy. If that were allowed to happen, government intervention would not stop at the economic level, but would touch other areas such as individual choice and personal freedom. Without an open market, there could not be prosperity. In case of prolonged unemployment, Marxism or Fascism could take over. In the words of Assistant Secretary of State Dean Acheson, "we

cannot expect domestic prosperity under our system without a constantly expanding trade with other nations". As another State official noted, "the capitalist system is essentially an international system...if it cannot function internationally, it will break down completely" (LaFeber, 1985, p. 9. See also Mammarella, 1980, p. 32). Besides, it was their opinion that closed trading blocs very easily develop into political blocs.

²⁸ The Portella delle Ginestre Massacre, the first in the long history of the IG, was perpetrated in Sicily by the Mafia against farm labourers celebrating May day, as well as the many killings by the Mafia of Communist trade unionists who dared to challenge their rule. See for example Cipriani, 1994. For the connection between clientelism, corruption and the IG see Rosella Dossi, "The Darker Side of Power. The Invisible Government, Clientelism and Corruption in Italy", forthcoming.

²⁹ *La Repubblica*, 17.5.2000, *Ibid.*, 1.8.2000, *Ibid.* 23.8.2000

³⁰ Berlusconi joined the P2 on 5 May 1978, paying a subscription fee of Lire 100,000. See P2 membership list in P2 Commission, *Allegati alla Relazione*.

About the Author

Rosella Dossi recently submitted her PhD thesis on “Italy’s Invisible Government: Overt Democracy, Covert Authority” at the University of Melbourne. Her areas of interest are democratic theory; elite theory; the Invisible Government; and Italian politics, corruption and clientelism. She has also written on the Northern League and Berlusconi’s Forza Italia.

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