

Licio Gelli's 'Comeback' Is Tension Strategy

by Claudio Celani

This analysis of the September 2003 public resurfacing of the notorious Licio Gelli, head of the P-2 Masonic Lodge which was at the center of the right-wing "Strategy of Tension" of the 1970s and 1980s, was published in EIR, Oct. 17, 2003. It is excerpted here.

The "puppet-master" of Italian politics as he defined himself in 1980, Licio Gelli resurfaced in late September in an interview in which he insisted the Synarchist faction he notoriously represents, is again running Italian politics.

The Grand Master of the secret Propaganda Due (P-2) freemasonic lodge disbanded in 1981—the largest international conspiratorial organization ever discovered in the western world—was at the center of Italian political and media attention in the 1980s as Anglo-American secret operations through the P-2 lodge and the "Gladio" network were exposed. Gelli gave an interview to the leftist daily *La Repubblica* on Sept. 28, to announce that he still pulls the strings in Italy.

Gelli is now 84 years old and has served a short sentence (under house arrest) for obstructing justice in the 1980 "strategy of tension" terrorist bombing of the Bologna train station. He told *La Repubblica* that his Synarchist conspiratorial "Plan for Democratic Rebirth" is being implemented step by step, partly by blackmail of Italian political leaders. His interviewer revealed that the infamous P-2 leader remains extremely active and receives people in three cities; in order to meet him, one has to wait for at least 12 days.

The resurfacing Signor Gelli is representative of the Italian terminus of an international financial power group which Lyndon LaRouche calls the Synarchist international, whose current most dangerous political front-man is U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney. Gelli has been for many years a pivot between the Synarchist financial oligarchy and its political/terrorist arm. His public re-emergence . . . is clearly to destabilize Italy, knocking it out of a French- and German-led opposition to the Cheney group's policies.

'I See My Plan Being Implemented'

Defeating the European strategic opposition to the Synarchist "perpetual war" scenario, as well as the potential for a Eurasian policy of economic development, is Gelli's aim.

"I look at the country, read the newspapers, and think: Look, everything is being implemented, little by little, piece after piece," Gelli told *Repubblica*. "Maybe, I should ask for authorship rights. Justice, television, police reforms: I wrote everything 30 years ago." Of course, such a statement has heavy implications for Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, himself one of the 960 known members of Propaganda Due. Berlusconi has never denied having joined the P-2, but he has denied being aware of its subversive aims. Gelli calls him "an above-average man. I remember well, already at the time of our first meetings, that he had this characteristic: He knew how to implement his projects. A man of action. We need those people in Italy—no talk, action." Gelli praises Berlusconi because he recently appointed another former P-2 member as coordinator of his Forza Italia party. "Berlusconi was right in cleaning up his party recently, to put it in the hands of a man like [Fabrizio] Cicchitto. I know Cicchitto well: He is good, competent."

Why is Gelli boasting? And does he really control the Italian government? A partial answer was given by the former chairman of the parliamentary investigating committee on the P-2, Tina Anselmi, in an interview in *Repubblica* the next day. Anselmi, very worried by Gelli's statements, recalled that Cicchitto had given her committee one of the clearest explanations of how P-2's power worked. Cicchitto had explained that he, at that time a leader of the Italian Socialist Party, felt a distinct threat to his life, including from people shadowing him in a period when terrorism was rampant in Italy. "Friends told me: if you want to eliminate the threat, go to Gelli. I did that, and the threat disappeared."

But Gelli's arrows are not only for Berlusconi. He has some also for Vice Premier Gianfranco Fini, and for the third "strong man" in the government, Lega Nord (Northern League) leader Umberto Bossi. Gelli recounts his friendship with the founder of the neo-Fascist party, the Italian Social Movement (MSI), Giorgio Almirante: "We were good friends, we were in [Mussolini's] Social Republic together. I financed him two times: The second time for Fini. He was a real promising guy, Fini. In the last couple of years, he sort of faded." Gelli then, with studied ambiguity, told his interviewer, "There is only one puppet-master; there cannot be more than one."

On his "plan," and the nature of P-2's power in Italy, Gelli claimed, "Look, I do not owe anything to anybody. But all of those whom I met, owe something to me. There are some rebels, whose lives I have saved, and, still today, when they meet me, they embrace me." Rebels? "Yes, those rebels, who were on the mountains, during the war. I was an officer between the Italian and the German command, and I saved a lot of them." Asked if he meant anti-Mussolini partisans, he replied, "Call them whatever you like, we were on opposite sides, but when you are in front of a friend, the uniform doesn't count for anything. Friendship and loyalty to a friend come before anything else." That is why Gelli, an unrepentant Fas-

cist, praises the spokesman of Berlusconi's party, Enrico Bondi, a former Communist. "I think that Bondi is competent too. He is a product of party discipline." The source of discipline "doesn't matter," Gelli emphasized. "What matters is discipline, and the respect for hierarchy."

A Short History of the P-2

In his youth, "puppet-master" Licio Gelli was a member of the Fascist Party and participated in the Spanish Civil War on the side of the Falangists. After Sept. 8, 1943, he joined Mussolini's separatist Italian Social Republic (RSI) and founded a party section in the city of Pistoia, working as a military officer in connection with the SS. Soon after, however, he established contacts with factions in the Resistance, and participated in a military action against the German occupation forces.

Later, in 1950, a report sent by American Embassy sources to Italian intelligence characterized Gelli as a Communist International agent. Thus, he fits the profile of those characterized as "nazi-communists" or "Synarchists" in wartime American intelligence files; these files described a conspiracy to establish Falangist-type regimes in continental Europe and Great Britain in the period immediately preceding World War II.

Gelli was picked up, with hundreds of "former" fascist military, intelligence, and police officials, by James J. Angleton's CIA, and recycled into the "anti-communist" government security structures of postwar Italy. Such structures, as Italy knows from painful attacks and exposures over decades, promoted right-wing, left-wing, and mafia terrorist actions in a strategy to create chaos and confusion. Starting in 1969, with the bombing of the Banca Nazionale dell' Agricoltura office in Milan, this was called the "strategy of tension."

Gelli was mandated by his international masters to create the P-2 project in 1965. He was introduced into Italian freemasonry, and in a few years became head of the P-2 secret lodge, supported by Grand Orient leaders Salvini and Gamberini. Gelli enrolled an incredibly large section of the national anti-communist elite: especially military and intelligence officials, but also politicians, bankers, and corporate leaders. The P-2 also has affiliates abroad, especially in South America. . . .

In 1976, the P-2 strategy shifted after general elections saw an impressive advance of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) to 32% of the votes, only one point behind the ruling Christian Democratic Party (DC). Furthermore, Christian Democrat Aldo Moro's strategy of breaking the PCI from Moscow and involving it in a pro-western national coalition government, was proving successful. Gelli's masters now tasked P-2 to conquer government centers of power and promote key institutional reforms, according to the guidelines described in a paper entitled "Plan for a Democratic Rebirth." On Feb. 16, 1978, Aldo Moro was kidnapped (and killed three months later) by the terrorist Red Brigades, the same day the "national solidarity" government he engineered, led by Giulio



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Andreotti and passively supported by the PCI, was sworn in the Parliament. Henry Kissinger's two-year-old threat, that Moro's attempt to nationalize the PCI "would have a bad end," was realized.

When the list of the members of the P-2 Lodge was discovered in 1981, Italians learned that the heads of *all* of the agencies which were supposed to find Moro's prison and arrest the terrorists, were P-2 members. The Lodge's *international* connections were merely indicated by the documented association between Michael Ledeen—a leading U.S. neo-conservative today with the American Enterprise Institute—and the P-2-controlled leadership of the SISMI military intelligence service. Francesco Cossiga, then minister of police, was Gelli's good friend. . . .

Gelli told his *Repubblica* interviewer, about Moro: "I went to Moro to present my credentials, when I was the consul for a South American country. He told me: You come in the name of a dictatorship, but Italy is a democracy. He explained to me that democracy is like a bean soup: To cook them, you must be very patient. I answered: Take care that your beans are not left without water, Signor Ministro." The threat is clear, not only against Berlusconi, Fini, and Bossi whom he named, but also others in the opposition, and Italian leaders opposing Cheney's gang's policies: You can end up like Moro did.