# **Propaganda Due**

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Jump to: navigation, search

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P2 came to public light with the exposure of Michele Sindona and the Banco Ambrosiano scandal, in which the Vatican Bank had many shares. P2 has been involved in Gladio's strategy of tension - Gladio was/is the name of the secret "stay-behind" NATO paramilitary organizations. Between 1965 and 1981, it tried to condition the Italian political process through the penetration of persons of confidence to the inside of the magistracy, the Parliament, the army and the press. Beside Italy, P2 was also active in Uruguay, Brazil and especially in Argentina's "Dirty War" (with Raúl Alberto Lastiri, Argentina's interim president from July 13, 1973 until October 12, 1973; Emilio Massera, who was part from 1976 to 1978 of the military junta led by Jorge Rafael Videla; and José López Rega, minister of Social Welfare in Perón's government and founder of the Argentine Anticommunist Alliance ("Triple A") as members).

#### **Contents**

#### [hide]

- 1 Foundation
- 2 Discovery
- <u>3 Criminal organization?</u>
  - o 3.1 Parliamentary commission directed by Tina Anselmi
  - o 3.2 New Italian law prohibiting "secret lodges"
  - o 3.3 Banco Ambrosiano scandal
  - o 3.4 Aldo Moro and the strategy of tension
  - o 3.5 Iran-Contra and assassination of Swedish prime minister Olof Palme
- 4 Licio Gelli's list of P2 members found in 1981
- 5 Endnotes
- <u>6 See also</u>

- 7 Film
- 8 External links

# [edit] Foundation

The lodge was founded in 1877, under the <u>Grande Oriente d'Italia</u> ("Grand Orient of Italy"), as a lodge for visiting members unable to attend their own lodges. In the mid 1960s, it had only 14 permanent members, but when <u>Licio Gelli</u> took over in the 1960s and 1970s, he rapidly expanded the membership to over 1,000 (most of whom were prominent and elite Italians) within a year. The expansion was almost certainly illegal, as Italian civil servants are generally forbidden from joining secret societies.

In 1976, Masonic authorities withdrew the lodge's charter and expelled Gelli from Freemasonry.

### [edit] Discovery

"God's Banker" Roberto Calvi's connections with the Worshipful Master Licio Gelli became a particular focus of press and police attention, and caused the lodge (then secret) to be discovered. A list of adherents was found by the police in Gelli's house in Arezzo in March 1981, containing over 900 names, among which were very important state officers, some important politicians (4 ministers or former ministers, and 44 deputies), and a number of military officers, many of them enrolled in the Italian secret services. Notably, the then future Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi was on the list, although he had not yet entered elective politics at the time. Another famous member was Victor Emmanuel, Prince of Naples, the current head of the House of Savoy. A document was also found in the possession of Licio Gelli titled "Piano di Rinascita Democratica" (Democratic Rebirth Plan) which amounted to a declaration of the lodge's intent; essentially, Gelli's goal was to form a new political and economical elite to lead Italy towards a more authoritarian form of democracy, in an anti-communist perspective.

"The objective of the division of the trade-union must be a priority," the Plan stated, "in order to allow the reunification with the autonomous unions of those confederal components sensitive to the Plan's actuation". [1]

Then-prime minister <u>Arnaldo Forlani</u> was forced to resign, causing the fall of the Italian government. <u>Giovanni Spadolini</u> of the Republican Party (<u>PRI</u>) was then appointed, leading a <u>center-left</u> coalition. Spadolini was the first Italian prime minister not belonging to the <u>Democrazia Cristiana</u> ("Christian Democrats") party. All the secret services' heads, among whom <u>Vito Miceli</u>, had to resign.

# [edit] Criminal organization?

### [edit] Parliamentary commission directed by Tina Anselmi

The lodge was then examined by a special commission of the Italian Parliament, directed by <u>Tina Anselmi</u> of the <u>Democrazia Cristiana</u>. The conclusion of the commission was that it was a secret <u>criminal organization</u>, even if no proof was found of specific crimes committed. Allegations of surreptitious international relationships, mainly with <u>Argentina</u> (Gelli repeatedly suggested he was a close friend of <u>Juan Perón</u>) and with some people suspected of belonging to the American <u>Central Intelligence Agency</u> were also partly confirmed; but soon a <u>political debate</u> overtook the <u>legal</u> level of the analysis.

### [edit] New Italian law prohibiting "secret lodges"

Even though outlawed by <u>Mussolini</u> in 1925, masonic institutions have been tolerated in Italy, but a special law was issued that prohibited <u>secret lodges</u>. The *Grande Oriente d'Italia*, after taking disciplinary action against members with P2 connections, distanced itself from Gelli's lodge and claimed to have respect for only honest Freemasons. Other laws introduced a prohibition on membership in such organizations for some categories of state officers (especially <u>military officers</u>). Such laws have been recently questioned by the <u>European Court of Human Rights</u>.

### [edit] Banco Ambrosiano scandal

Main article: Banco Ambrosiano

P2 became the target of considerable attention in the wake of the collapse of <u>Banco Ambrosiano</u> (one of <u>Milan</u>'s principal banks, owned in part by the <u>Vatican Bank</u>), and the suspicious 1982 death of its president <u>Roberto Calvi</u> in <u>London</u>, initially ruled a suicide but later prosecuted as a murder. It was suspected by many that some of the plundered funds went to P2 or its members.

### [edit] Aldo Moro and the strategy of tension

Main articles: Aldo Moro and strategy of tension

It has been repeatedly alleged that P2 was involved in the assassination of Prime Minister Aldo Moro, murdered by the Red Brigades, after the Italian Security Services refused to strike a deal with the abductors, but no concrete proof was ever found. It has also been suspected that P2 was involved in the 1980 Bologna massacre as part of the *strategia della tensione* followed by "stay-behind" secret NATO clandestine structure Gladio, which led to the opening of investigations, in the 1990s, by the Italian Chamber of Deputies.

### [edit] Iran-Contra and assassination of Swedish prime minister Olof Palme

Main article: Iran-Contra affair

According to an interview given by former <u>CIA</u> agent <u>Richard Brenneke</u> and Ibrahim Razin to <u>RAI</u> journalist Ennio Remondino, P2 received funds from the CIA and had been involved in the Iran-Contra affair as well as in the <u>strategy of tension</u>; apparently the CIA supported it because of its determination to stage a <u>coup</u> should the Communist party take power. Due to the importance of the matters discussed, this interview gave rise to a letter from Italian president <u>Francesco Cossiga</u> to prime minister <u>Giulio</u> Andreotti. Extracts:

"Q: Excuse me, but your statements are very serious. You say that the P2 was a creation, the financial and organizational arm of the CIA to destabilize, to run covert operations in Europe?

*Richard Brenneke*: There is no doubt. The P2 since the beginning of the 1970s was used for the dope traffic, for destabilization in a covert way. It was done secretly to keep people from knowing about the involvement of the U.S. government. In many cases it was done directly through the offices of the CIA in Rome and in some other cases through CIA centers in other countries."

*Richard Brenneke*: "The P2 was involved in the operation for which I ended up in court, that is the delay in the liberation of the American hostages in Iran in 1980" (known as "October surprise").

Richard Brenneke claims to have met <u>Licio Gelli</u> in <u>Paris</u> in October 1980, in relationship to the "October surprise". According to him, <u>William Casey</u>, who would later become head of the CIA but was at that time manager of the <u>Reagan-Bush</u> campaign, was present, as well as <u>Donald Gregg</u>, who became ambassador to <u>South Korea</u> but at that time worked for the CIA and the <u>National Security Council</u>.

Also interviewed, agent Ibrahim Razin claimed that three days before Swedish prime minister's Olof Palme's assassination, in 1986, Philip Guarino, a member of the Republican circle around George H.W. Bush, received a telegram signed by Licio Gelli and sent by one of his men, Umberto Ortolani, from "one of the southernmost regions of Brazil". The telegram said: "Tell our friend that the Swedish palm will be felled." As yet, Olof Palme's murder has not been solved.

According to Ibrahim Razin, "P2 was at the center, one of the main participants in the illegal <u>arms</u> <u>traffic</u>, which was connected to the <u>drug</u> traffic from the outset. P2 also made a substantial contribution to the recycling of large amounts of money used for this arms and drugs traffic from one country to another." Answering to a question on CIA-P2 relations, Razin says: "Suffice it to see how the P2 was involved with <u>Banco Ambrosiano</u> and with <u>Michele Sindona</u> and how the CIA was involved with them

in several financial manipulations. For example, in the United States the big scandal involving the <u>S&L</u> <u>banks</u> is big news. The <u>Texas</u> state prosecutor has found evidence of CIA involvement in the bankruptcy of many of these banks which used illegal funds for their operations. The man who knows a lot about this is Richard Brenneke, a former CIA agent from Oregon."

### [edit] Licio Gelli's list of P2 members found in 1981

- Over 900 names; it has been said that at least a thousand names are still secret. It included 30 generals, 38 members of parliament, 4 cabinet ministers, former prime ministers, intelligence chiefs, newspaper editors, TV executives, businessmen, bankers, 19 judges, and 58 university professors.
- Michele Sindona, banker linked to the Mafia
- Roberto Calvi, "God's Banker"
- <u>Antonio D'Alì</u>, owner of <u>Banca Sicula</u> (his son, Antonio D'Ali Jr., is senator of <u>Trapani</u>, elected on Forza Italia's list)
- Silvio Berlusconi, businessman & former PM of Italy
- <u>Victor Emmanuel, Prince of Naples</u>
- Antonio Amato, Cagliari
- General <u>Vito Miceli</u>, chief of the <u>SIOS</u> (*Servizio Informazioni*), Italian Army Intelligence's Service from 1969 and <u>SID</u>'s head from October 18, 1970 to 1974. Arrested in 1975 on charges of "conspiration against the state" concerning investigations about *Rosa dei venti*, a state-infiltrated group involved in the <u>strategy of tension</u>, he later became an <u>MSI</u> member
- Aldo Alasia, Buenos Aires
- <u>Luis Alberto Betti</u>, Buenos Aires
- Antonio Calvino, Buenos Aires
- Cesar De la Vega, Argentina
- Raúl Alberto Lastiri, Argentina's interim president from July 13, 1973 until October 12, 1973.
- Emilio Massera, with Orlando Ramón Agosti, he was part from 1976 to 1978 of the military junta in Buenos Aires, led by Jorge Rafael Videla
- <u>José López Rega</u>, Argentinian minister of Social Welfare in <u>Perón</u>'s government, founder of the <u>Argentine Anticommunist Alliance</u> ("Triple A")
- Alberto Vignes, Argentinian minister
- Argentinian amiral Carlos Alberto Corti
- <u>Maurizio Costanzo</u>, Italian journalist and television anchorman of many <u>Mediaset</u> programs (the <u>Berlusconi</u>'s commercial television)
- Franco Di Bella, director of <u>Corriere della Sera</u>
- Angelo Rizzoli, owner of Corriere della Sera, today cinema productor

- Tassan Din, general director of Corriere della Sera
- Massimo Donelli, director of TV Sole 24 hours
- Paolo Mosca, former director of "Domenica del Corriere"
- Gino Nebiolo, at the time director of Tg1, has been now sent to direct RAI in Montevideo
- <u>Franco Colombo</u>, ex-correspondent of RAI in <u>Paris</u>, aspirant to P2, now vice-president of the society in charge of the Montblanc Tunnel
- Fabrizio Cicchitto, former PSI member, now in Forza Italia
- Alberto Sensini, aspirant to P2
- Roberto Memmo, who did a lot to help Michele Sindona, is now director of the *Fondazione Memmo per l'arte e la cultura*, based in *Palazzo Ruspoli* in Rome
- Rolando Picchioni, ex-Democrazia Cristiana deputy, now secretary of the Salone del libro di Torino
- <u>Giancarlo Elia Valori</u>, the only member of P2 who had been expelled (possibly because he was trying to gain a bigger role than Licio Gelli), is now president of the *Associazione industriali di Roma*
- Roberto Gervaso, Italian journalist and writer
- Colonel Italo Poggiolini
- Giovambattista Palumbo
- General Pietro Musumeci
- Twll Dydindi Pharoh
- Giuseppe Siracusano
- Giovanni Allavena
- Franco Picchioni
- Giulio Grassini
- Colonel <u>Antonio Labruna</u>
- Colonel Manlio del Gaudio
- General Giuseppe Santovito
- Judge Giuseppe Renato Croce
- Judge Giovanni Palai
- Walter Pelosi (director of <u>CESIS</u> from 1978 to 1981)
- Gustavo Selva, journalist and National Alliance deputy
- Pietro Longo, secretary of the PSDI
- <u>Publio Fiori</u>, <u>Democrazia Cristiana</u> deputy, transferred to National Alliance in 1994, minister under <u>Berlusconi</u>'s government
- Antonio Martino, minister under Berlusconi's government (aspirant to P2)
- <u>Duilio Poggiolini</u>, ex <u>PLI</u> Health minister
- Massimo de Carolis, Democrazia Cristiana in the 1970s, now member of Forza Italia, expresident of Milan's municipal council thanks to Berlusconi's help
- Angelo de Carolis, politician

- Mario Tedeschi, politician
- Enrico Manca, socialist politician
- Pierluigi Accornero, businessman
- Mario Lebole, businessman
- Jorge de Souza, Brazil
- Pedro dos Santos, Brazil
- Claudio Perez Barruna, Costa Rica
- Osvaldo Brama, Dakar
- Guido Ruta, United States
- Randolph K. Stone, Los Angeles, USA
- Dott. Hatz Olah, Melbourne, Australia
- Roberto(Bob)Patino, buisness man

# [edit] Endnotes

- 1. ^ La loggia massonica P2 (Loggia Propaganda Due) (Italian)
- 2. ^ Documentation President Cossiga's letter { What follows is a translation of the letter sent

### [edit] See also

- Banco Ambrosiano scandal
- Licio Gelli, headmaster of P2
- <u>Iran-Contra affair</u>
- Savings and Loan crisis
- Strategy of tension
- Gladio
- <u>Dirty War</u>

# [edit] Film

• LICIO GELLI - Poet and Conspirator, Feature Documentary by Gabor Harrach, Italy, USA, 2006

# [edit] External links

- The list of P2 members
- List of P2 members
- Text of the Democratic Rebirth Plan (in Italian)

- The image of the original Silvio Berlusconi's membership card
- An image listing some of the members of P2
- Skepticfiles on President Cossiga's letter to Giulio Andreotti following RAI interview with Richard Brenneke and Ibrahim Razin on Irangate
- Article by Gianni Barbacetto

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