

THE *Italic Way* XXXV 2009

The magazine of the Italic Institute of America

ITALIANS TO THE RESCUE:

CAN THEY SUCCEED AT CHRYSLER
WHERE THE GERMANS FAILED?



SERGIO MARCHIONNE
CHAIRMAN OF
FIAT

IN THIS ISSUE:

HITLER'S FIRST DEFEAT, 75TH ANNIVERSARY
MADOFF, PONZI & PECORA
ITALY: THE FIRST UNIFICATION

LUIGI BARZINI, THE LITERARY VIRUS
CONSTANTINE, THE 13TH APOSTLE
REVIEW: *EMPIRES OF TRUST*



The Italic Way

Contents

Tid Bits.....	1
Italy Update	3
All'Italiana	4
World Notes	6
Editorials	8
Forum of the People	9
Book Review	10
Italians to the Rescue? (Cover Story)	12
Hitler's First Defeat	14
Madoff, Ponzi & Pecora	17
Constantine, The 13th Apostle.....	19
The Barzini Virus	21
Italy's First Unification	23

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Corrections

In our last issue we stated that Senator Jim Webb represented North Carolina. In fact, he represents Virginia.

Tid Bits

In 1928, the state of Georgia acted to commemorate the old Confederacy with a giant sculpture at Stone Mountain, outside Atlanta. The man chosen to design and execute the largest stone sculpture, 36 stories high, was Italian American Teodoro Bottinelli. For two years he chiseled into granite, spending 45 minutes each day just to climb the mountain to his work area.

Although the final product took decades and was completed by other sculptors, it was Bottinelli who planned the figures of Confederate leaders and completed the imposing relief of General Robert E. Lee. The Georgia treasury ran out of funds by 1929 and Bottinelli went on to other projects.

Those other projects included the 20 stone eagles lining the Arlington Memorial Bridge in Washington DC.

When we claim that Italians helped build America, we mean literally as well as symbolically.

[Ed. Our thanks to activist Joe Maselli of New Orleans for reminding us of Teodoro Bottinelli.]



Reflections on Judea

The December 2008 issue of *National Geographic* echoed the sentiments of our previous articles on the Jewish War of 70 AD. Israeli archeologist Ehud Netzer is quoted as saying that a growing number of Israelis view the suicidal courage of Masada's defenders as senseless fanaticism: "Many people say that they should have negotiated with the Romans, not fought blindly to the death." The article goes on to speculate "Perhaps Herod's entente with the Romans, long considered betrayal, is beginning to seem more like statecraft." In fact, Herod was able to build the Great Temple under Roman rule.

Perhaps the Tenth Legion would have spared the women and children of Masada had they been asked. But we do not believe the Zealot men would have been shown mercy. According to Jewish historian Josephus, those Zealots tricked the original Roman garrison on Masada to surrender and then massacred them to a man. The Romans never forgot. [See *Masada* in issue XXV and *Why Rome Created Palestine* in issue XXXII.]



Salieri Cleared?

Rumor had it that Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart fell victim to the malevolent Antonio Salieri (pictured), a rival composer at the royal Hapsburg court in Vienna. The fanciful story was the basis of the play and movie *Amadeus*. True, Mozart died unexpectedly at age 35 and a Berlin newspaper of the time announced that he had been poisoned. However, Dr. Richard Zegers at the University of Amsterdam now believes all evidence suggests that the musical genius succumbed to strep throat. His findings were published in the August 18th issue of *The Annals of Internal Medicine*. Nonetheless, diabolical Italians make for better drama. In our own time and country, "the mob" still figures prominently in conspiracy theories ranging from the JFK assassination to World Trade Center design flaws.

Feds Lose \$102 Million Suit

It will never be a movie, but the U.S. government lost its appeal against four Italian American families in Massachusetts. It seems that the Boston FBI withheld vital evidence favoring Joseph Salvati, Peter Limone, Henry Tameleo and Louis Greco in the 1965 killing of hoodlum Teddy Deegan. The four were railroaded into four decades of imprisonment. Tameleo and Greco died in jail before being vindicated.

Quote of the Year

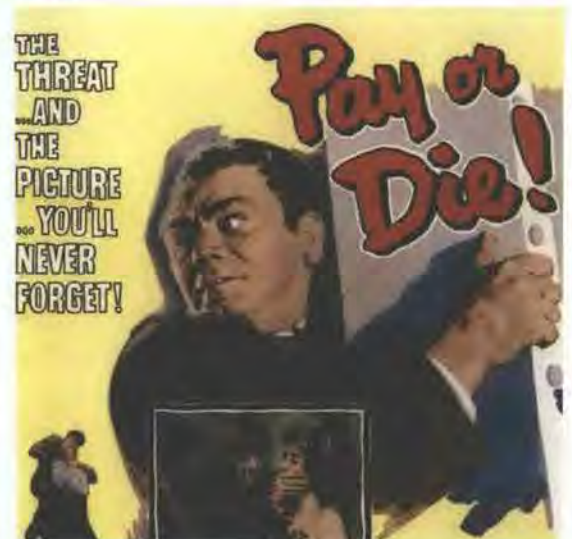
When asked by *The Wall Street Journal's* Candace Jackson if he would ever go back to playing a mobster, actor James Gandofini replied: "I don't foresee it in my future unless someone I know is really hungry. Listen, I wouldn't do it unless I needed the money, to tell you the truth. That's the bottom line with that kind of stuff." [WSJ, July 17, 2009 p.W2]

Italian Law Family

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the assassination of police lieutenant Joseph Petrosino by the Black Hand while on investigation in Sicily. The fact that Petrosino was the first and only American police officer killed while on duty in a foreign country is only part of his story. His descendants followed him into law enforcement. Grandnephew and namesake Joseph Petrosino is a prosecutor in the Brooklyn DA's office, while his son and namesake is a rookie cop in Queens.

Author Thomas Reppetto (*NYPD: A City and Its Police*) observes that the original Petrosino was a pioneer in what is now being practiced by the NYPD, using detectives as intelligence officers in foreign lands. The practice was revived to combat terrorism after the 9/11 attack.

Petrosino was immortalized in the 1960 film *Pay or Die*, starring Italian American actor Ernest Borgnine.



ITALY UPDATE

by Rosario A. Iaconis

Having weathered the global economic meltdown with relative equanimity – despite experiencing negative economic growth in the last two quarters – Italy was once again buffeted by the odious slings and arrows of the nation's Reforms Minister, Umberto Bossi.

At a recent rally celebrating the birth of his *Lega Nord* party, Bossi publicly called for the secession of Lombardy and Piedmont – the regions he claims constitute his fairy-tale “Padania.” Additionally, he excoriated Italy's eternal capital as “*Roma Ladrona*” (“thieving Rome”) and contemptuously told his followers that the Italian flag (the *tricolore*) should be used in the bathroom to wipe one's *derriere*.

Though Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi may need the *Lega* in his government – it is a strong and ostensibly conservative bloc – this affront to national honor is nothing short of treason.

Of all the members of Silvio Berlusconi's center-right government, the “*Senatur*” (as he is dubbed in the Lombard dialect by the Italian media) remains the most loathsome. Congenitally divisive, Bossi is to Italian unity what carcinogens are to vibrant health: a festering malignancy.

Nonetheless, the former hospital orderly has forever earned himself a place in Italian history – by nearly tearing the Republic asunder via a national referendum on the *Lega's* fetid brand of federalism. He also collapsed the first Berlusconi government in 1994.

Not long after Bossi's histrionics, however, Italy was jolted by the news that six of its valiant soldiers had been killed in Afghanistan. The massive funeral was broadcast globally, making the front page of *The Wall Street Journal*.

Yet this sad event acted to unify the Magic Boot. All six caskets were draped in the august *tricolore*. And the Italian government remained committed to carrying out its global mission.

More ominous for the Berlusconi coalition, Italy's highest court overturned the immunity law shielding the Prime Minister from prosecution while in office. Already under seige by the media for a silly season of suggestive flirtations, Berlusconi may now be focused on legal battles stemming from his past business dealings.

Though Berlusconi is a bit of a bombastic showman, he remains popular with most voters. His sexual peccadilloes pale in comparison with, say, Israel's former president Moshe Katsav who is currently on trial for rape. Silvio's survival till the 2013 elections will ultimately depend on the economy and his jousts with the judiciary.

On the green front, there is reason for solid optimism concerning *il bel Paese's* energy outlook. Sunny Italy boasts a flourishing solar power market. In fact, the Magic Boot – Europe's third biggest solar power producer – recently coupled generous government incentives with private sector investment (the Intesa Sanpaolo bank) to significantly increase the nation's number of photovoltaic (PV) panels, which convert sunlight into power.

From north to south, “Italy has the best combination of solar resources and a feed-in tariff in Europe,” maintains Thomas

Gregory of Emerging Energy Research (EER), a global consulting firm.

Who knows? *O Sole Mio* may turn out to be the EU's new energy anthem. ****



Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and just some of the young ladies he hangs with. Many, including his wife, do not appreciate his eye for beauty.



With friends like these...Berlusconi depends on his coalition partners Umberto Bossi (l.) and Gianfranco Fini (r.). Bossi wants to destroy Italy and Fini has gone from being a Fascist to a consummate flip-flopper.



The country mourned the loss of six servicemen in Afghanistan. Support for the NATO effort is faltering.

**MICHAEL APOLLO
& FAMILY
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All'Italiana

IN MEMORIAM

First Sgt. Jared C. Monti, 33, killed in combat during his second tour in Afghanistan trying to save a wounded comrade.

Awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor posthumously, Sgt. Monti was the first Army member to receive the Medal of Honor in Afghanistan. He enlisted at age 17.



Fred Travalena, 66, master of impressions, began his career as an Army entertainer during the Vietnam War. He had the ability to shape his face as well as his voice to impersonate such celebrities as Ted Koppel, Sammy Davis Jr., Jack Nicholson and all U.S. presidents from JFK forward.

Comic **Dom DeLuise**, 75, began his career doing children's daytime television in the 1950s. Adults in the 1960s might remember his character Dominick the Great, the bumbling magician on late night talk shows. His long career made him a TV and cinema regular, working with stars such as Johnny Carson, Burt Reynolds, Gene Wilder and Mel Brooks. He found an outlet for his love of food in writing humorous cookbooks.

Vintner **Robert Mondavi**, 94, took California wines to new heights. His struggle to produce fine wines in the Napa Valley began after a falling out with his own family. His relentless pursuit of quality led him to a joint venture with Chateau Rothschild of France that produced the Opus One label. It was the first California wine to sell at the heady price of \$350 a bottle.

Susanna Agnelli, 87, former Italian foreign minister and matriarch of the Agnelli FIAT dynasty, died in Rome last May. Raised by an English nanny, who taught her English and family pride, Agnelli left business operations to her brother and later her grandnephew. Her interests led her into politics, medical charities and the environment. "She was the most efficient person that I ever met," was one comment made about her. She kept a home on New York City's Park Avenue where her Sunday brunches included such diverse guests as Senator Jacob Javits and artist Andy Warhol.

John Furia Jr., 79, was the Hollywood scriptwriter for popular television shows that included *Bonanza*, *The Waltons*, *Hawaii Five-O*, *Dr. Kildare*, *The Twilight Zone*, *Kung Fu* and *Bob Hope's Chrysler Theater*.

British writer/director **Anthony Minghella**, 54, died following surgery in 2008. Among his credits were the Oscar-winning *The English Patient*, *Cold Mountain*, and *The Talented Mr. Ripley*.

Dr. William Taliaferro Close, 84, was the personal physician to Zaire's president Mobutu Sese Seko and the chief doctor in that country's army. He was also the father of American actress Glenn Close. His most important achievement was helping to contain an Ebola epidemic in Zaire, now known as Congo, during the 1970s. His skill as a medical doctor and his positions of authority in Zaire were crucial in the ultimate control of the dreaded disease. Nearly 300 people died in that epidemic. Dr. Close spent seventeen years in Africa eventually becoming disillusioned by Mobutu's corruption. He returned to the U.S. and settled in Wyoming where he made house calls up to a month before he died.

Gerard Damiano, 80, was a pioneer in film pornography. His infamous 1972 film, *Deep Throat*, opened the floodgates for triple X sex films. Shot in six days for \$25,000, the film is now a sex classic having grossed more than \$600 million and as many viewers. Its enduring title crossed over into politics with the Watergate scandal. The secret informant that led to President Nixon's resignation was code-named Deep Throat.

Dr. Anthony Tuzzolino, 76, was a space scientist who designed and built over 40 devices used in satellites to measure cosmic rays and other phenomena. His work began in 1958 with the Pioneer 2. He led teams that put devices on satellites to Jupiter, Mercury and Mars. His last position was as senior scientist with the Enrico Fermi Institute in Chicago. Like Fermi, Tuzzolino's parents immigrated from Italy.

Lazare Ponticelli, 110, was France's last living veteran from the First World War. Italian-born but working in France, he lied about his age to join the French Foreign Legion in 1914. He saw action against the Germans and then against the Austro-Hungarians when he was drafted into the Italian Army in 1915. He was wounded in the face on the Italian front. His comment on life: "War is completely stupid."



Papal Envoy Pio Laghi, 86 was a veteran Vatican diplomat. In 2003, in a meeting with President George W. Bush, he urged the president not to invade Iraq citing the potential civilian casualties and instability in the region. He also saw a widening gulf between Islam and Christianity. Indeed, thousands of Iraqi Christians suffered persecution and were driven out of that country.



Middleweight champion **Joey Giardello** (nee Carmine Tilelli), 78, won 101 fights over his fifteen-year career. His most famous bout was against Hurricane Carter in 1964. Although he won by decision his reputation was plagued by the 1999 movie, *Hurricane*, starring Denzel Washington. The movie gave the impression that Giardello's victory was a racist decision that ultimately caused Carter's life to fall apart. Giardello sued, demanding that the movie show excerpts of the real fight to prove that Giardello had the better of Carter in the final rounds. Director Norman Jewison refused and only added a verbal commentary to the special features on the DVD.

Jazz drummer **Louie Bellson** (nee Luigi Balassoni), 84, was hailed for his "colossal talents [that] have helped write the history of jazz in America," by Chair Jane Alexander of the National Endowment for the Arts in 1994. He pioneered the use of two bass drums and had the second most appearances at the White House, after Bob Hope. He played with jazz greats Count Basie, Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman, just to name a few. In 1952 he rocked the country with his marriage to black singer Pearl Bailey when interracial marriage was far from common.

MADONNA GIVES BACK

She was born Madonna Louise Ciccone but her stage name is just Madonna. She rarely pays homage to her Italian side (she is also part French-Canadian and spiritually in the Jewish camp) but the devastating earthquake in her father's ancestral region, Abruzzi, tugged at her Italian roots. Madonna donated \$750,000 to help the survivors of the region. The quake left 290 people dead and 28,000 homeless. As bad as the loss of life is the destruction of so much of the cultural patrimony in the city of L'Aquila and nearby villages. Buildings and churches dating back hundreds of years must be torn down or restored. The Italian spirit is so often tied to the visible heritage around it. Restoration is a spiritual as well as a physical need.

SPACE CALLS

Another Shuttle launch, another Italian American, or so it seems. Last March, Commander Dominic Antonelli guided the Shuttle Discovery back to terra firma after a 13-day mission to the International Space Station. Then in May, spacewalker Michael Massimino from the Shuttle Atlantis had the challenging job of replacing a frozen bolt on the orbiting Hubble Space Telescope. The bolt came out on the third try and Hubble got a new lease on life. Massimino's companion on the Hubble mission was John Grunsfeld. Grunsfeld's love of science came from a third grade report he had to do about physicist Enrico Fermi: "*I consider Enrico my lifelong role model.*"

HATS OFF

If you ever wonder who makes the wide-brim black hats that are the required accoutrements of Hasidic and Orthodox Jews, think

Italian. "The Hats," as they are sometimes called by reform Jews, prefer Italian manufacturer Borsalino or the Columbian brands, Puerto Fino or Barbisio. The Columbian factory that produces those fedora style hats was founded by Bruno Lacorazza's father. Bruno, a Columbian citizen of Italian origin, fills a vital niche in the Jewish community. While his wife runs the North Miami Beach outlet, Bruno dutifully purveys his products to retailers in Brooklyn, the heartland of Hasidic and Orthodox communities.

CIVIL WRONGS

Last June, the Supreme Court of the United States decided in favor of firefighter Frank Ricci in his battle against the city of New Haven, Connecticut. The case was a landmark decision that defended the rights of white and Hispanic firefighters against affirmative action policies. Ricci and 18 other white firefighters had taken competitive exams for promotions in the New Haven Fire Dept. and achieved high scores. Because no black firefighters had scored high enough, the city feared possible lawsuits from blacks. Consequently, it denied the whites their promotions and threw out the test results. Ricci, who is dyslexic and studied 8 to 13 hours per day using tape recorded study materials, was outraged by the injustice. Justice Alito, speaking for the majority, stated that Frank Ricci and the others deserved protection "*...of Title VII's prohibition against discrimination based on race. And that is what, until today's decision, has been denied them.*"

PAYING PENANCE

Libyan dictator Moammar Gadhafi seems to be calling the shots with European leaders. The Brits just recently released the convicted Libyan terrorist who blew up a commercial airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988. The Brits commuted the dying ter-



rorist's life sentence for humanitarian reasons, but more likely to ease the way for coming business deals with Gadhafi. The Italian government, in its turn, showered the Libyan leader with \$5 billion in reparations and a public apology for thirty years of Italian colonial rule. Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi happily hosted Gadhafi in Rome where the dictator hailed a "new era" in Italo-Libyan relations. One can only imagine the vast oil reserves that can make grown men beg.





WORLD NOTES

GALS ON THE GO

Art, some say, reflects life. But judging by the American film industry, Italic women are permanently chained to the kitchen. How unreal is that? Just look at a few of the names that have cropped up in the news recently: Janet Napolitano, new Secretary of Homeland Security; Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representative; Carla Del Ponte, Prosecutor of the International

Criminal Court; and Sonia Maino Gandhi, President of India's ruling Congress Party. Not bad for a heritage that always gets knocked as male-centric. The truth is women have always been strong in Italic culture. Cato the Elder's famous lament, "*We Romans who rule all men are ruled by our women,*" wasn't just patronizing talk. The old senator was shouted down more than once in public by disgruntled ladies.



What is all the more amazing is how Italic women manage to beat out their brothers in achieving firsts. Geraldine Ferraro was the first female, and Italic, U.S. Vice Presidential candidate. Both Napolitano and Pelosi became the first female and Italic executives to fill their challenging posts. In the case of Sonia Gandhi, she was a complete outsider who married into the renowned India clan and spoke no Hindi. Yet, this year she is credited with the election landslide that put her Congress Party in control of India's parliament and government. At the Hague, Carla Del Ponte's force of will brought both former Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic and Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic to justice for genocide. They all make us proud.

LATIN NEED NOT APPLY

There is a movement afoot in the British Isles to purge the King's English of Latin words and phrases. Touting "plain language" as

a practical need, a few British municipalities worry that the common man no longer understands such foreign phrases like *bona fide*, *ad lib*, *ad hoc*, *et cetera* and *eg.*, in official documents. Admittedly, plain English is a Germanic language, but a good percentage of its vocabulary, like *per cent*, comes from the Italic Language Family. Words like *auditorium*, *calculator* and *exit* are some of the 300 plus words that come directly from Latin. For the average Brit, *veto*-ing (i.e., forbidding) the use of everyday symbols *lbs* for pounds (*libras*) and *d* for penny (*denarius*) may be *reductio ad absurdum*.

CIA MATCHMAKING

Former president Bill Clinton's secret trip to North Korea to free two American hostages had a happy ending. But as the *New York Times* reported after the mission, much credit was due to Joseph R. DeTrani, the CIA's man heading the North Korean desk for brokering the terms of the visit. Knowing with whom to deal with at the various levels of North Korea's hierarchy, and how to deal with them, was vital for a successful outcome. DeTrani had also served as a special envoy to the six-party talks with North Korea before taking his current post. And in case things went awry, senior adviser to President Obama, John Podesta, went along with Clinton. It should also be noted that DeTrani's boss is Leon Panetta, Director of the CIA.

FISH & CHIPS

Before pizza found its way to the United Kingdom, Italian immigrants were fulfilling the British need for fish and chips. Our researcher, Peggy Fox, came across a 1992 monograph by John K. Walton that traces the origins of the industry: "*...Italians seem to have been in at the start of the fish and chip trade in Scotland,*" writes Walton. Between 1890 and 1914 the Italian immigrant population of Scotland rose from about 750 to 4,500. Enterprising Italos from Tuscany and Lazio began selling statuettes, then ice cream and eventually fish and chips. At the time, many Scotsmen were outraged. Wrote one, "*The wily Italians found out that there was much more money in [fried fish] than in ice cream...they have gradually wormed their way into the business and ousted the Britishers...*"

Across the Irish Sea, "the fish and chip trade in Ireland seems to have been Italian-dominated from the start," according to Walton. But in England, the Italians took a back seat to other immigrants. Curiously, fish and chips was never an Italian tradition and immigrants returning to their home regions found no market for deep fried fish. Italians, it seems, only appreciate their *zeppole* fried.



IRAQ REFLECTIONS

In his second book on the Iraq War, *The Gamble*, Thomas Ricks writes that the 2006 "surge" of additional U.S. troops in Iraqi cities "had been more or less conceived and executed by [General Ray] Odierno..." with crucial coaching from retired General Jack Keane and from General Petraeus. Although Iraq appears to be stabilized at the moment, the then 3-year war was on the verge of unraveling. General Odierno and the others conceived of a three-prong strategy to recapture the initiative: the introduction of an additional 30,000 U.S. troops, remaining in neighborhoods to protect civilians, and turning Sunni militias against Al Qaeda insurgents. For saving a bad situation General Petraeus was rewarded with running the Central Command (Middle East) and General Odierno became supreme commander in Iraq.



NEW MED TECHS

Stem cell research is showing more signs of practical use. Dr. Douglas Losordo at Chicago's Northwestern Memorial Hospital is taking the lead in applying stem cells to unblock leg arteries in trial tests being conducted this year. Patients suffering from diabetes, high cholesterol or the effects of smoking often face amputation for blocked blood vessels. Using stem cells to grow new blood vessels will save thousands of patients from the surgeon's knife. If successful, the new treatment will be ready by 2012.

Fighting cancer may change if scientist/engineer Michael Cima's new device is successful. His team at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.) has developed a tiny implant the size of three letters on a dime that will bond with tumors for continuous monitoring. Inserted with a biopsy needle, the implant will eliminate follow-up biopsies and costly MRIs. The implant will tell doctors how effective treatments are on a daily basis using only a handheld scanner. Cancer may truly become only a chronic condition rather than a fatal one.

Can your eyeteeth cure blindness? Italian doctor Benedetto Strampelli invented a complex method to do just that in 1963. But it was only after ophthalmologist Giancarlo Falcinelli of Rome worked out the bugs did eyeteeth become a new tool in treating some forms of blindness. The technique reached the United States this year with a successful procedure on a 60-year old woman in Miami. With months of preparation and healing, the patient regained her sight (20/70) after nine years of blindness.

LEGION OF HONOR

It took France 65 years to finally reward Louis Venditti of South Chicago Heights, IL, for his service in liberating that nation from the Nazis. Venditti is now 87 years old but his memories of parachuting into Normandy on D-Day are still difficult for him. Despite the mixed emotions he agreed to visit France again for the awards ceremony in Paris this past June. The American veteran already has a French Croix de Guerre. The Legion of Honor is France's highest honor for service to France. It was established in 1802 by a fellow Italic, the Emperor Napoleone Buonaparte. Venditti received his honor in a ceremony attended by President Obama and President Sarkozy of France.

THE PRICE OF SERVICE

The Italian military suffered a blow in the Afghan War in September, losing six troopers to a suicide bomber in Kabul. These latest fatalities do not sit well with the Italian public. Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has already notified NATO that there must be a troop reduction from his nation, if not a complete withdrawal. Questionable election results in Afghanistan as well as skepticism of the Afghan military have given Italians deep doubts.

On another front, Lebanon, Italian-led peacekeepers for the United Nations are trying to suppress a new round of rocket attacks by Hezbollah on Israeli border towns. The Italians were the first to volunteer for this crucial duty as part of a truce in the 2006 border conflict that took 1,000 Lebanese and 160 Israeli lives.

SPAIN'S DNA

When King Ferdinand and Queen Isabel drove the Muslims and Jews out of their new domain, not everyone left. Geneticists have found that 22% of the population of Spain and Portugal have Sephardic Jewish ancestry and 11% have Moorish ancestors. One of Osama bin Laden's dreams is to restore the Iberian Peninsula to the Muslim world, which occupied it from 711 AD to 1492. Before that, it was ruled by the Vandals, a Germanic people (Andalusia was originally Vandalusia). The first natives were Celt-Iberians and Basques. The Semitic Carthaginians occupied parts of the peninsula two centuries before Christ. Italic blood and language came with colonization after Carthage was defeated by Rome. Two of Rome's greatest emperors were born in the colonial city of Italica (near Seville): Trajan, Hadrian as were the antecedents of Marcus Aurelius (pictured). Neither bin Laden nor geneticists will change the fact that Iberia is an integral part of Latin civilization.



Editorials

Advanced Placement Exams & Our Heritage

The Italian Language Foundation, an *ad hoc* organization dedicated to promoting Italian language in America via the Advanced Placement (AP) College Exam, suffered a major defeat in 2009 when its efforts to fund the program came up short, resulting in its suspension during the 2009-2010 school year. But although the usual suspects had a hand in its failure – Italian American parental apathy and a perpetually weak economy – one of the main saboteurs was no less than our beloved Italian Republic, which reneged on its promise of financial assistance.

Sadly, this is a familiar tune. In Chicago, *Italidea*, an educational non-profit created to fund Italian language programs in suburban junior high schools, has been reduced to holding annual golf and bocce outings to make up for *la bell'Italia*'s cutback of funds. Imagine the U.S. government instituting an English language program in Italy and then asking the Italians to raise cash by holding pasta parties. Even Silvio "The Billionaire" Berlusconi would decry such American crassness.

Truth be told, the Italian government has historically done very little to promote the Italian language in any meaningful way in America, particularly among young Americans of Italian heritage. Instead, funding is mostly aimed at wealthy elites, city governments or political organizations, all of it geared toward encouraging more tourism to Italy. We Italian Americans are treated like flies at a picnic by the Italian government -- we are shooed away.

The key to building an interest in the Italian language here is, of course, to inspire young people to love it at an early age. We know we sound like a broken record but the Italic Institute's *Aurora Heritage Program* does exactly that, inculcating a love of *la lingua italiana* in 10- and 11-year old students on Saturdays (Just look on page 16 to see the type of kids we served in Staten Island, NY before funding was lost.). Logically, this then creates more of a demand for it at the junior high and high school levels where the AP is offered. The i's have been dotted and the t's have been crossed with *Aurora*. All that is left is the funding. Wherefore art thou, *Italia*?

-Bill Dal Cerro
National President

Crime Families

How bitterly ironic that in an age rife with fundamentalist Islamic terrorism – and Al Qaeda cells ensconced in cities and suburbs all across this land – the media, law enforcement and the courts continue to hype shopworn Hollywood stereotypes of Italian American hoods.

The Department of Justice should start focusing on the overriding existential threat facing America -- and stop using the term "crime family" when referencing criminal syndicates. "Crime family" calls to mind Puzo, Coppola and corpulent capos – both real and imaginary. And the term has become a code word for Italians. Thus wrote former PBS newscaster Robert MacNeil in *The Story of English*.

Only surnames ending in vowels are equated with the phrase "reputed family member." This is not to say that such goons don't exist. Victoria Gotti -- the apologist for a vile and contemptible clan -- and her ur-simpleton sibling, Junior, spring to mind. But they are not emblematic of the Italian people. In fact, they are an aberration.

Therefore, the government and media ought to call them rings, gangs or syndicates. The use of "family" gives them a cultural connotation. Recently, *The New York Times* reported on an Israeli-American "crime ring" that was made up of eight relatives. Crime family, it seems, is used solely to stigmatize Italians. Let's call a spade a spade, no code words, please.

-Rosario A. Iaconis
Vice Chairman, East

Missed Rendezvous

Our Institute is going where others fear to tread. The more research we conduct into the pre-war years of 1933-1935 the more disturbing are the discoveries. Using easily available sources we have laid bare the machinations of European statecraft on page 14. Italian Americans have been sensitive in avoiding any taint of Fascism in dealing with the Second World War and the years preceding it. Like most children of the victorious Allies we have a simple explanation for the causes of that war. But simple is not what you find when you open the 1930s up for scrutiny. Rosario Iaconis' piece on the attempted Austria takeover in 1934 is a subject that mainstream academics must explore. Great Britain, France, and the United States held the key to Adolph Hitler's future in 1934. If these Western democracies had followed Italy's lead and directly challenged Nazi aggression, history could have taken a very different course. According to Britain's one-time War Secretary Duff Cooper, Italy was a crucial partner in containing the Nazi time bomb. So, who lost Italy?

-Alfred Cardone
Advisory Council



Forum of the People



CHOOSING OUR BATTLES

By Dante Martinelli

I was aghast when I read the half-page ad in the *New York Times*.

There, in the International section, where half-page ads cost over \$75,000, I saw the logo of the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF). What would have prompted spending such money? The title read "Great American Roccos and Their Cousins." Okay.

It was all about some *NBC Sports* announcer Johnny Miller making tasteless jokes at the expense of an Italian American golfer named Rocco Mediate. Rocco had come this close to beating champion Tiger Woods at the U.S. Open. Miller went on about how anyone named Rocco doesn't deserve golf trophies; how this Rocco should be cleaning Tiger's pool. The guys at NIAF were right in nailing Miller. But is this the best way to spend tens of thousands of dollars?

So, the ad comes out. Johnny Miller doesn't apologize for the slurs, and he isn't fired by NBC. The actual Rocco doesn't even publicly comment on them. Rocco Mediate (a nice guy I am sure) has his 15 minutes of fame trying to catch an injured Tiger Woods in need of surgery (Tiger still beat Rocco). Where is Rocco now? Just another golfer, it seems. Heck, Rocco didn't even rise above mediocrity for the rest of last summer.

Let's get back to the \$75,000. As a member of the Italic Institute I receive newsletters. Back in 2007, there was a story about some 14-year old boy in Batavia, Illinois, who refused to participate in a school play about the mafia in which the kids were coached by a teacher to speak in coarse Italian-American/New York accents.

His mother found the play an insult to Italian Americans – and wanted it stopped. NIAF, the Sons of Italy, the Italic Institute and other groups lent their moral support. An Italian American lawyer labored *pro-bono* to halt the play.

In the end, though, it was another lost cause. No one had the will or the money to nail the school in court. It would have been a

national victory of great significance. The student became so stressed from all the publicity and his schoolmates' taunts that his mother pulled him out of public school and into a private one.

The Italian American organizations agreed to pass the hat for the boy's first year tuition. The Italic Institute sent \$1,000, the Sons of Italy sent \$1,000, and over \$2,000 was collected from other groups and lodges. NIAF? It pledged \$1,000 but never came up with the money, or even an ad in any newspaper.

Was Rocco more important than that 14-year old in Batavia? Were Rocco jokes more destructive than mafia plays in middle schools?

Golf may be a game of skill but some of us need to keep our eyes on the real ball.



Mrs. Marina Amoroso-Levato and her son Johnny (left) receive the Institute's Silver Medallion and \$1,000 check from Midwest Vice Chairman Don Fiore in 2007

Great American Roccos and Their Cousins

Johnny Miller recently opined that "guys with the name of Rocco don't get on the trophy" and "looks more like the guy who cleans Tiger's swimming pool." If Miller had used exactly the named Rocco and Tiger, every media pundit and civil libertarian in America would have called more rational to exile Johnny Miller to the corner of the broadcast booth wearing a dunce cap. Appropriate and productive than a pink slip.

It Americans named Rocco reveals the surnames Colavito, Marciano, Graziano, and Mancinelli. NIAF Bo frequently been heralded as a prime example of the American success story. Miller seems not to know that residents of Georgetown, Harvard, Tufts, and Yale universities as well as sundry other American instit

NIAF
THE N
ITALIAN FOUN
WWW.



Book Review

EMPIRES OF TRUST

Thomas F. Madden
297 pages
Dutton, July 2008

A Review by Michael J. Polelle, Professor of Law, The John Marshall Law School

Empires of Trust is written for an American public whose knowledge of ancient Rome is often based on Hollywood stereotypes of gluttony, violence, and orgies. Madden, a professor of history at Saint Louis University, wrote *Empires of Trust* because he believes America, comparable to Republican Rome, is in its heyday and not in its decline.

The book title derives from Professor Madden's thesis that America and ancient Rome are rare examples of "Empires of Trust," or as the subtitle puts it: "How Rome Built – and America Is Building – A New World." The word "empire" has two meanings. It can literally mean any state governed by an emperor. Instead, Madden used "empire" to mean any state extending control beyond its borders, whether or not it has an emperor. Empires thus defined come in three categories for him: Empires of Trust (such as the United States and ancient Rome), Empires of Conquest, and Empires of Commerce. An Empire of Conquest is basically smash and grab: get a large army and keep conquering until satisfied or stopped. Genghis Khan's reign is an example of this. Empires of Commerce are driven primarily to make a commercial profit, such as the British Empire and medieval Venice.

According to Professor Madden, America and ancient Rome are a rare imperial form: Empires of Trust. He argues that these empires were and are trusted not only to use power responsibly but that their empires serendipitously resulted from that trust. For example, he compares the sack of Locri in ancient times with the scandal of Abu Ghraib in Iraq. The city of Locri had betrayed Rome, its ally, by switching over to the Carthaginians. The Locrians protested their harsh treatment to the Roman Senate after a Roman commander captured the city. To beg for mercy and grovel in mitigation of their treachery? Not on your life. They complained that the commander had "no trace of the Roman" in him and treated them as a conquered population. More remarkable was the action of the Roman Senate. With the type of disapproving distaste Americans had for the torture of Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib, the Roman Senate agreed with the Locrian demands for restitution. Just as the Locrians believed they could hold the Romans to their self-professed high standards, Arab leaders believed Americans could

be ashamed for not upholding their high standards.

The author sees recurrent parallels between the Roman empire and the American empire. Both were born in rare rebellion against kingship. Both built their states on the cornerstones of internal citizen freedom and collective security against foreign forces led by kings. Rome and the United States idealized their founding citizen-farmers' self-reliance and love of the land. By revolting against monarchs, Romans and Americans developed an instinctive distrust of concentrated political power reflected in their constitutions.

For a long time both Empires of Trust also remained isolationist and suspicious of king-ridden outsiders. Professor Madden shows that, like America, Romans used war as a last resort and fretted about waging only "just wars." Until recently at least, the United States has also waged war only after exhausting other options. Both nations developed the knack of turning enemies into friends by a system of alliances. Roman allies retained varying levels of self-governance but were obligated to contribute troops in times of war and fulfill other limited treaty obligations. Rome gained security without the burden of governing and the ally gained security while leaving the heavy military lifting to the Roman legions. Likewise, the United States has developed a similar network of alliances. The European members of NATO spend far less on their armed forces than would be necessary if the United States did not spread over them its superpower shield. The United States bears the lion's share of military expense but knows none of the allies has the will or means to match our superpower superiority.

The Romans offered alliances not merely to the defeated but eventually to others who wanted to be protected against their own enemies. Professor Madden shows how the "push" growth of alliances accelerated into a "pull" force, exponentially expanding alliances across the whole Mediterranean world. Italian allies fought the Social Wars against Rome because

they wanted to be full Roman citizens. Roman citizenship gradually extended across the empire so that even St. Paul, as a citizen, could demand a hearing in Rome. Professor Madden suggests Europeans might someday want the same because our President controls their destiny.

The author is not a Pollyanna romantic. He admits that the Romans, like Americans, often used direct control, sometimes brutally. This usually happened against less developed societies, such as the barbarian tribes in northern Europe or the American Indians, and sometimes, in the case of Rome, because the conquered cities preferred direct control to treaty obligations. The trust in Roman rule was so great that kings, upon death, some-

*The trust in Roman rule was so great
that kings, upon death,
sometimes willed
their kingdoms to Rome.*





Presaging U.S. foreign aid, the Romans built extensive infrastructure in conquered lands. Every subject province had roads and potable water. This aqueduct in Segovia, Spain is still functioning.

times willed their kingdoms to Rome. The Romans reluctantly accepted these gifts but refused to accept the gift of Egypt from Ptolemy Alexander I because they preferred to rule indirectly through Egyptian kings. The author quotes Cicero: "By defending our allies our people have gained the whole world."

Professor Madden notes the similarity between the Roman love-hate relationship with the ancient Greeks and that between Americans and Europeans. He compares the Greeks and modern Europeans to aging cultural parents who remember their glory days and resent the upstart super-powers. Some Greeks belittled the Romans as country bumpkins but were the first to call for Roman help. Americans are similarly ambivalent about Europeans, cowed by their rich culture but dismissive of what they consider Old World decadence. Originally neither Rome nor the United States wanted their troops in the self-destructed worlds of ancient Greece and modern Europe but ultimately were forced to do so for reasons of their own security. The Romans could not more see Greece fall to Eastern powers than we could afford to see Europe fall to the Russians.

The book ends on a word of warning about the role of terrorism in the Roman world, as well as its lessons. The Jews initiated an alliance with Rome to fight the Seleucid Empire long before Romans set foot in the region. With Roman help, the Jews recovered their independence. Unlike Hellenized Jews who appreciated Graeco-Roman culture, a conservative Jewish element resented it and craved a worldwide kingdom of God's Chosen people under the only true God. The Romans made a fateful decision to ally with the Hellenized faction in one of its constant battles with the increasingly radical element. The Romans entered a quagmire of terrorism where those suspected of loyalty to Rome would be surreptitiously knifed in the marketplace by radical Jewish terrorists. Would-be messiahs arose as fringe Jewish militants morphed into fanatics and squared off against one another. Herod the Great, a Hellenized Jew, quieted things at a terrible price. He killed so many of his family that

*Containment and isolation without
a military presence feeding
fanatic flames
might be a better policy.*

Augustus quipped it was safer to be a pig in Herod's palace than a son. After Herod's death, the Jewish internecine turmoil erupted again. In exasperation, Augustus reduced the kingdom to the province of Judea. The whirlwind of Roman involvement and Jewish rebellion soon escalated into the destruction of the Temple and the Diaspora.

Sound familiar? Substitute the rulers of the Arab world for Hellenized Jews and Al Qaeda and its wannabes as the new terrorists and you have the American dilemma. The author claims Rome solved the terrorist dilemma by changing the Jewish religion. After the Romans destroyed the Temple, Jews organized around the local synagogue and followed rabbis rather than a High Priest. But he also offers no proof the Romans had any conscious plan to change the religion, even though the destruction of the Temple may have had that consequence.

The author notes that religious terrorists cannot be won over by the rational policies espoused by Empires of Trust. Madden wisely observes that, like Rome, we must distinguish between terrorist elements of a religious faith and the moderate elements. He then makes the more questionable claim that the United States will need to keep a permanent military presence in the Middle East and wage decisive war against the Muslim fanatics, just as the Romans did against Jewish fanatics. Wars do solve problems, he says.

Does this mean we should destroy mosques and reduce Muslim countries to provinces? A backwater fringe-state like ancient Judaea is not the same as a religious faith claiming over one billion people, scattered across the world and politically dominant in numerous countries. Rome might have been better off had it never interfered in Jewish internal squabbles. Containment and isolation without a military presence feeding fanatic flames might be a better policy. The formation of an alliance should be a prudent choice for an Empire of Trust, not a matter of knee-jerk jingoism, unless it wants to turn into an Empire of Conquest. After all, it was George Washington who warned against "entangling alliances."

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OUR LOVE FOR YOU
IS ENDURING.**



Italians to the Rescue:

by John Mancini & Anthony Vecchione

Can Italian creativity trump German engineering? Can the American public be weaned from Asian economy cars by an Italian "mouse," the legendary FIAT 500, formerly nicknamed "il Topolino?"

The answers to these questions will be revealed in 2010 (or early 2011) when automaker Chrysler Corporation begins producing and marketing Italian-designed cars in the United States. The event will mark the culmination of an 18-month integration of FIAT's small car technology with Chrysler sales and service.

To get to this point Chrysler has had to plunge the depths of bankruptcy and beg the American taxpayer for \$10 billion in loans. Before that, the automaker suffered through a dead-end relationship with German master Daimler-Benz and then a purely financial affair with Cerberus Capital Management. The difference this time around is that the FIAT deal will be more like a full marriage, an integration of complimentary partners. FIAT, unlike Daimler, has only a tiny share of the American market, and Chrysler has no small car technology.

Together, both companies see a symbiosis. The FIAT 500, with one version achieving 55 mpg, is only one of many models American consumers can fall in love with. FIAT also owns Alfa Romeo, Lancia, Ferrari and Maserati, all names that are the stuff of dreams to many motorists.

The FIAT Dream

While Chrysler will be happy to survive and repay its loans, FIAT has a greater ambition. The Italian auto giant is on a quest. Fiat is the world's 6th largest carmaker without a North American market. To secure its future it needs to produce millions more vehicles each year, or so believes Sergio Marchionne, its CEO. Acknowledging the laws of natural selection, Marchionne sees success in terms of numbers and diversity. Volume is the key to his strategy. His goal is 5.5 to 6 million vehicles per year. Considering that FIAT produces only 2.2 million units currently, Marchionne has miles to go.

FIAT had a global agenda even before Marchionne took over the company in 2004. The Italian automaker was the first to pierce the Iron Curtain by building a factory in Russia in the late 1960s. That factory is currently producing one million Ladas, a tougher version of a FIAT original, each year at a city named for Italian Communist Palmiro Tagliatti (in Russian: Tolyatti). In Poland, a FIAT 500 rolls off the line every 55 seconds. The factory is so state-of-the-art that Chrysler engineers and managers are now required to visit Poland to see for themselves. FIAT Mexico

The [FIAT] factory is so state-of-the-art that Chrysler engineers and managers are now required to visit Poland to see for themselves.

is already slated to produce the engines for Detroit's Italian cars and a joint venture with China will push FIAT deeper into the Chinese market, where FIAT's truck division, Iveco, is already humming.

FIAT has divisions that produce trucks (Iveco), farm and construction equipment (Case New Holland) and even auto robotics (Comac). Clearly, the Italian auto giant has the know-how and global reach to turn Chrysler around. What it is not offering Chrysler is money. The FIAT deal is a trade: 20% – 35% ownership in Chrysler for the Italian's goodwill. That goodwill includes a FIAT philosophy that is a world apart from Chrysler's experience



The FIAT 500 Cinquecento. Up to 55 miles per gallon and half the price of a Mini Cooper. Are we ready for it?

with the Germans.

Innovation Gap

The Germans failed with Chrysler, according to some analysts, because they were too rigid and hierarchical. Daimler treated Chrysler as a stand-alone division rather than as a global partner. The Germans stifled creativity with endless committees looking for hidden problems rather than encouraging innovation. (Remember it was Chrysler that developed the minivan.) The new FIAT prides itself on thinking outside the box. FIAT engineers recall the problems they had with General Motors as a partner in 2004. Then, the Italians were on the cusp of inventing a new gasoline engine. The

GM people resisted the new technology declaring it too complex and too costly. In fact, GM paid FIAT \$2 billion to walk away from their partnership. The Italians went on to develop their Multi-Air engine, which they claim consumes 10% less gasoline and

emits 20% less carbon dioxide. It will debut this year.



Can Chrysler Be Saved?

Italian engineers will also redesign the Chrysler Sebring using technology from the Alfa Romeo *Milano*. Speaking of which, Alfa's best selling compact, the *MiTo*, will be marketed here soon.

The FIAT Story

Would you believe that FIAT had a showroom in New York City in 1904 and an assembly plant in Poughkeepsie before the First World War? That was even before Walter Chrysler founded his brand in 1925. FIAT was founded in 1899 by Giovanni Agnelli. The name means Italian Automobile Factory at Turin (*Fabbrica Italiana Automobile Torino*). The Agnelli family still owns it and it's still in Turin.

FIAT has been a mainstay of Italy's economy and culture for over a century. It has survived the Savoy monarchy, the Fascist corporate state and the Italian Republic. It provided Italy the armaments to wage two world wars. FIAT trucks, tanks and warplanes coped with the deserts of Libya, the rugged terrain of Abyssinia and the Balkans and the frozen steppes of Russia. In peacetime, it has competed against the best French and German competition to carve out a major piece of the western European market. The FIAT 500 (*il Topolino*), was born in the mid-1930s as a "peoples' car." (It may have inspired Hitler's Volkswagen. It has always been a sentimental favorite of Italian drivers, which is why it was reborn twice: after the Second World War and again in this decade as the *Cinquecento*.)

But FIAT had its own financial problems in 2003 and 2004. Marchionne was hired in 2004 to solve those problems, which he did. One of his strategies is increasing efficiency and quality on the manufacturing side. Older Americans still wince at memories of imported FIAT's of the 1970s like the *Strada* that lacked service and parts. Overcoming this negative history will be the true test of FIAT's reentry into North America.

Today, FIAT employs 200,700 people around the world and sells 2.5 million vehicles a year. With the Chrysler deal it will add another 2 million vehicles, approaching CEO Marchionne's critical mass of 5.5 million units. The remaining number was supposed to come from Opel, the German carmaker that Marchionne offered to buy. That purchase didn't pan out. FIAT will continue to seek the magic number.

The Chrysler Story

Ironies abound in the Chrysler story. It was founded in 1925 by Walter Chrysler, an American of German heritage. The Chrysler brand included Plymouth, DeSoto, Dodge and Chrysler

vehicles and even the M-60, the main battle tank of the U.S. military. By 1975, both the CEO and the President of Chrysler were Italian Americans, John Riccardo and Eugene Cafiero. The company they inherited was on the brink of bankruptcy from poor planning, an energy crisis and a nationwide recession. Sound familiar? It was Riccardo who hired Lee Iacocca who, in turn,

saved the company from disaster with innovation, personal TV appearances and the first minivan. After Iacocca's departure in 1983 the company held its own until 1998. By then, Chrysler needed another shot in the arm. Along came a new hero — Daimler-Benz (aka Mercedes-Benz), the German über-corporation.

Chrysler continued to feed the global demand for SUVs, trucks and minivans. But rising gasoline prices and tough competition left the carmaker vulnerable. By 2007 the Germans lost \$10 billion, despite touting "German engineering" and avuncular TV ads by the mustachioed Daimler chairman Dieter Zetsche. He was no Lee Iacocca. Financial wizards at Cerberus Capital bought into the ailing automaker, relieving the Germans. By 2008, both the CEO and president of Chrysler were again Italian Americans, Robert Nardelli and Thomas LaSorda. In 2009, the worst came and Chrysler went into bankruptcy. But instead of another Lee Iacocca, the new hero is an Italian named Sergio Marchionne. If this isn't the stuff of coincidence, nothing is.

By 1975, both the CEO and the President of Chrysler were Italian Americans, John Riccardo and Eugene Cafiero. It was Riccardo who hired Lee Iacocca.



Alfa Romeo is owned by FIAT. This is the *MiTo*, a European favorite. The Alfa name is still magic in the auto world. It may soon be offered at Chrysler dealerships.

Sergio Who?

Sergio Marchionne knows a thing or two about being in tough spots and finding a way out. In 2007, Marchionne's Ferrari 599 GTB Fiorano collided with a Renault on a Swiss highway. Both drivers escaped without injury.

(Cont'd on p. 16)



Hitler's First Defeat:

By Rosario A. Iaconis

Imagine a world where the Holocaust never happened. No Anschluss. No World War II.

Today, with the United States embroiled in two seemingly endless conflicts in the Middle East, historians, leaders and pundits all across the political spectrum are reassessing the history of that earlier war, probably the most devastating struggle in human memory.

Indeed, the likes of Vladimir Putin, Nicholson Baker and Patrick Buchanan have come to the same conclusion that the Second World War was not inevitable. Rather, a failure of foreign policy and an excess of hubris helped bring about such a calamitous conflict. And tens of millions of innocent lives were slaughtered in a global conflagration that still sears our collective soul.

Not long ago, former U.S. President Bill Clinton posed a most haunting question: "What if someone had listened to Winston Churchill and stood up to Adolph Hitler?" Well, someone did. But Britain's Last Lion had nothing to do with it. No, the only man to thwart Hitler's plans for conquest prior to 1942 was, quite improbably, Benito Mussolini. In fact, July 25, 2009, marked the 75th anniversary of Adolph Hitler's first defeat – at the hands of his fellow dictator. The battleground was Hitler's native soil, Austria.

The story of Hitler's obsession with Austria can be documented as early as 1925 with the publication of *Mein Kampf* ("My Struggle") which he wrote during a prison stay for his botched beer hall *putsch* of 1923. Born in Austria-Hungary, a vast multi-ethnic empire, Hitler became fiercely pan-Germanic and virulent-

On June 18, 1933, one year before the Italians singlehandedly stopped a Nazi takeover of Austria, five years before Munich, the news media reported the techniques Hitler would use to destabilize Europe.

ly anti-Semitic: "...there arose in me a feeling of intense love for my German Austria home and a profound hatred for the Austrian State." As for future aggression, Hitler set himself a necessary prerequisite; "The German people will have no right to engage in a colonial policy until they shall have brought all their children together in one state." [i.e., into the Third Reich] Austria, in short, was to be Hitler's first victim.

Few diplomats at the time bothered to read *Mein Kampf*. Mussolini found it boring and repetitive — and never finished it. But he knew what Europe faced when Hitler finally came to power in January, 1933. Austrian Nazis were already laying the groundwork to destabilize their independent state.

In *The New York Times* of June 18, 1933, on page 3, Europe's dark future was clearly discernible.

"AUSTRIA'S BATTLE WITH NAZIS HOLDS ATTENTION OF EUROPE,"

blared the headline (see

below). The Gray Lady's correspondent, Emil Lengyel, gave readers all they needed to know about Hitler's intentions. Granted, few envisioned the demonic Hitler to come at that time. Still, the dictator was in power a scant six months when he unhinged Germany and Austria.

The first warning came from Austria's Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss, as reported in the aforementioned June 18th article: "[Dollfuss] informed the leading powers of the precarious position Austria was in as a result of the menace of Hitlerism." Austrian Nazis had their own uniformed militia, "bombings and assaults were common." Hitler even starved the flow of German tourists into Austria by charging travelers 1,000 Reichmarks for an exit visa. Dollfuss fought back. When he banned militia uniforms the Nazis began wearing dress suits and top hats to get around the ban. No matter, Dollfuss had them arrested anyway.

Dollfuss and the ruling parties of Austria were Roman Catholic.

Imagine a world where the Holocaust never happened. No Anschluss. No World War II.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, JUNE 18, 1933.

XX 3

DOLLFUSS DECLINES

AUSTRIA'S BATTLE WITH NAZIS HOLDS ATTENTION OF EUROPE

Neighboring States See Their Interests Involved in the Fight of Chancellor Dollfuss for His Small Republic's Independence

By EMIL LENGYEL.

THE diplomatic tension between Austria and Germany, the country of birth and the adopted country of Chancellor Hitler, found dramatic expression last week when Chancellor Dollfuss, the smallest and youngest of the

Schutzbund. The Christian Socialists, too, had their fighting organization, the Home Defense Force, or Heimwehr. The stage was set for a possible three-cornered fight.

Then came the appointment of Hitler to the Chancellorship of Germany, and the Nazis in Austria as

reminded his fellow-citizens the other day: "In the Reich the Catholic newspapers are suppressed, priests are being persecuted and the Catholic parties have been shorn of power." Finally, Austria does not want to suffer the fate of Bavaria.



A Missed Rendezvous With History

They knew how woefully Hitler and the Nazis treated the church in Germany. They wanted no association with Germany on any level. Clearly, Hitler wanted Austria as a province of his Third Reich. The same *Times* article observed, "There is no separate Austrian National Socialist party; there is only one organization for both German countries. The supreme leader of the entire movement, both in Germany and in Austria, is Adolph Hitler."

In 1933, five years before Munich, even the newly created Czechoslovakia, saw a grim future. Again, the *Times* article notes, "In the case of a Nazi *Anschluss* [the unification of Austria and Germany] Czechoslovakia would be surrounded by Germany on all sides except the east."

So what was Dollfuss' next step? He flew to Rome and appealed to the one nation he trusted. After subsequent visits in 1933 Dollfuss and Mussolini became good friends. Moreover, Dollfuss succeeded in obtaining Italian support. The *Times* article reported, "Rome cannot tolerate any form of *Anschluss*, hot or cold, which would bring a powerful Reich to the gates of Italy." Dollfuss returned home and assured his people that Italy would not stand for a German Austria.

In March, 1934, the Italians concluded the so-called Rome Protocols with Austria and Hungary which confirmed their independence within the Italian sphere. Hitler was stymied.

This all may sound like revisionist history to those who only know Mussolini as Hitler's partner in war. Actually, the Duce and Adolph Hitler were not always political bedfellows. Indeed, when the two first met in Venice on June 14, 1934, after the events mentioned above, Mussolini excoriated Hitler for coveting Austria. Having acquired a personal aversion to the disheveled German dictator, whom he considered "quite mad," Mussolini found the Nazi doctrine of a master race to be "arrant nonsense" and openly repu-

standing secular tradition of philo-Semitism. The odious racial laws enacted in 1938 ran contrary to this custom.)

In a speech following their initial meeting in June, 1934, the Duce publicly humiliated Hitler by declaring that Germany would join Italy in respecting Austria's sovereignty.

But on July 25, 1934, Hitler struck back with a vengeance. Impatient with trying to slowly subvert Austria, the Fuhrer had



Austria's Chancellor Dollfuss sought and received Italy's protection against Nazi Germany. He and Mussolini became close friends.

Chancellor Dollfuss assassinated. Over one hundred people were killed, and more than two hundred suffered serious injuries. Enraged by Germany's duplicity, Mussolini dispatched 75,000

Italian troops to the Brenner Pass. The Italian mili-

tary had a complete plan (Plan K) to occupy southern Austria and to deal with both Austrian Nazis and German military units if need be. But Hitler ignominiously backed down and ceased all Nazi depredations in Austria. His schedule for European conquest ground to a halt.

The next day (Thursday, July 26, 1934) the front page in *The New York Times* told the tale: "AUSTRIAN NAZIS KILL DOLLFUSS, REVOLT FAILS; 146 PLOTTERS HELD; MARTIAL LAW IN EFFECT; ITALIAN ARMY, NAVY, PLANES READY TO ACT."

An editorial in *Il Popolo di Roma* declared: "Italy is in the first line of defense for the peace of Europe." What's more, the *Times* correspondent Arnaldo Cortesi wrote: "The impression tonight is that Italy probably is ready to go to any lengths, including military occupation, to prevent Nazi control of Austria."

According to the British historian Richard Lamb in *Il Duce's Italy on the World Stage: Mussolini as*

(Cont'd on p. 18)

Adding Austria to his Third Reich meant that western Czechoslovakia (the Sudetenland) would be surrounded by German military.



Mussolini dispatched 75,000 Italian troops to the Brenner Pass. Hitler ignominiously backed down.

diated Germany's virulent anti-Semitism.

In *Liberal Fascism*, Jonah Goldberg notes that "Jews were over-represented in the Italian Fascist Party and remained so from the early 1920s until 1938."

"Fascist Italy had nothing like a death camp system," writes Goldberg. "Not a single Jew of any national origin under Italian control anywhere in the world was handed over to Germany until 1943, when Italy was invaded by the Nazis. Jews in Italy survived the war at a higher rate than anywhere under Axis rule save Denmark, and Jews in Italian-controlled areas of Europe fared almost as well. Mussolini actually sent Italian troops into harm's way to save Jewish lives." (Unlike other nations, Italy has a long-



FIAT (continued from p.13)

Marchionne's relationship with FIAT dates back to 2003 when he was invited to the FIAT Board. In 2006, as the Chief Operating Officer, along with Fiat Group Chairman Luca di Montezemolo, he returned the then-struggling Fiat's automobile division to profitability, turning it into one of the fastest growing companies in the auto industry.

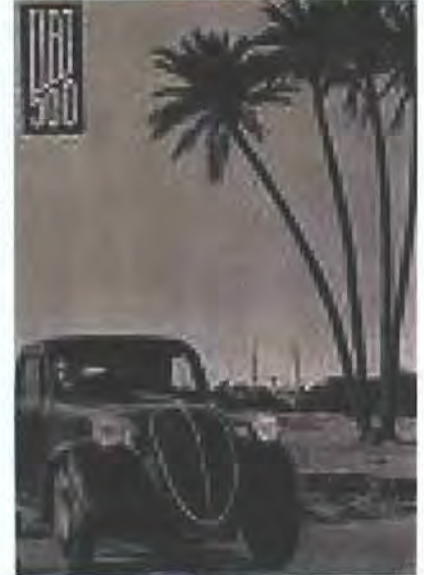
Marchionne was born in Chieti, Italy, in 1952. He studied in Canada and holds dual Canadian and Italian citizenship. He is a barrister, solicitor and a chartered accountant.

This past June, on his first day as Chrysler's chief executive, Marchionne told employees in the company's Detroit headquarters: "We intend to build on Chrysler's culture of innovation and Fiat's complementary technology and expertise to expand Chrysler's product portfolio both in North America and overseas. Although we have many challenges yet to overcome, there is no doubt in my mind that we will get the job done."

Both Chrysler and the American economy will be relying on

Marchionne's survival skills. Is he the right man at the right time? Will FIAT be a permanent brand in the USA? If Russia is any example we may have our answers, for 33% of the Russian cars driven today are Ladas.

The FIAT 500 was originally developed in 1936. Italians dubbed it *il Topolino* ("Mickey Mouse") for its size and economy.



Ten and eleven year olds from our Staten Island, NY Aurora classes towered over this 1960s version of the FIAT 500.



The tiny Cinquecento is definitely a commuter car but has seating for five.

Barzini (continued from p.24)

ness born of pride.

Luigi Barzini was, without question, the Typhoid Mary who infected a generation of Italian American writers and filmmakers. His virus plagues us still. For a select few he provided careers and wealth beyond their talents and expectations. For the rest of us, Barzini's virus still courses through our veins, forever reminding us how fragile our image and self-perceptions are.



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Madoff, Ponzi & Pecora

by Bill Dal Cerro

Bernard Madoff will probably never live in infamy. To achieve that he should have been born with an Italian name. Is it just a coincidence that names like Capone, Ponzi and Macchiavelli convey the universal message of skullduggery? But their Jewish counterparts, Lansky, Marcus and Engels mean little to most people. In English history "the fine Italian hand" connotes evil rather than craftsmanship. Globally, the word Mafia has come to mean any organized criminals. Even the words "reputed" and "crime family" come loaded with Italian meaning. There always seems to be a place for Italians in morality lessons. Our good deeds, as Mark Antony uttered, is oft interred in our bones.

Financier Bernard Madoff perpetrated an illegal pyramid scheme for over thirty years bilking thousands of people globally out of billions of dollars (\$18 billion by the last guess), yet his scheme is likened to Charles Ponzi, an immigrant Italian during the 1920s whose scam fizzled in eighteen months and cost victims far less. Will Madoff replace Ponzi as the adjective in Ponzi Scheme? Fat chance. Will the name Ferdinand Pecora ever be linked to corporate transparency or government regulation? Don't wait for the movie.

To put Madoff and Ponzi in perspective we need to journey back to the Roaring 20s.

There was another rip-off artist named Bernie, only this time from the 1920s: Bernard Marcus.

Ponzi, an Italian immigrant in Boston, pulled off what is officially known as a "Pyramid scheme"—a kind of financial shell game that pays off investors with returns made from other investors. When Ponzi was finally arrested in 1920, his case made headlines around the world and newspapers replaced the word "pyramid" with the more ethnic-specific "Ponzi." Rounded off in modern terms, Ponzi's final take was about \$4-5 million dollars—a far cry from the billions allegedly bilked by Bernie Madoff.

Why did the media feel compelled to use Ponzi's name as a yardstick for an illegal practice already established decades earlier? Keep in mind that anti-Italian sentiment was still rampant during the turn-of-the-century. Ponzi's trial came less than a decade after the infamous Palmer Raids conducted by the U.S. government, when hundreds of Italian immigrants were summarily thrown out of the country for espousing socialist views. In perhaps a carry-over of that sentiment, federal officials tried to deport Ponzi in 1922 as an "undesireable alien." Such prejudice culminated with the 1927 public executions of anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti in Boston, an event

now recognized by legal experts as a fount of injustice.

As it turns out, Madoff actually had a precursor. There was another rip-off artist named Bernie, only this time from the 1920s: Bernard Marcus, the flamboyant owner of the Bank of United States (or BUS, no "the"). In 1930, only eight years after Ponzi went to prison for bilking investors out of \$4-5 million dollars, Marcus and one of his assistants were tried, fined and convicted for causing the collapse of BUS, a crime totaling \$30 million dollars in losses. The bank was founded by Bernie's father Joseph, a Russian Jew who catered to the poor, struggling Jewish immigrants on Manhattan's Lower East Side. What the father built, the son destroyed.

A more piercing irony is that Madoff's financial crimes violated laws originally instituted by a great Italian American: Ferdinand Pecora, the dynamic lawyer who successfully prosecuted the robber barons and money scammers of 1930s Wall Street. The son of Sicilian immigrants, Pecora waged an anti-corruption campaign that landed him on the cover of TIME Magazine. President Roosevelt was so impressed he named Pecora the first commissioner of the then-new Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

To their credit, the media has partially resurrected

(Cont'd on p. 20)



Bernie Madoff - Even accounting for inflation, his scam dwarfed Ponzi's.



Charles Ponzi - He thought he had a surefire way to make money in foreign exchange rates. His scam only lasted a few months



Ferdinand Pecora - Working for Congress, he revealed the secrets of Wall Street to the American public.



Hitler (continued from p.15)

Diplomat, "Austria would have fallen to Hitler in 1934 had it not been for Mussolini. The combination of Italian and Austrian firmness proved that determined opposition to Hitler could prevent Nazi aggression, and Mussolini had set a fine example to Britain and France. Tragically, Britain ignored his success and failed to accept the lesson of the Austrian crisis – that despite all his defects, Mussolini's continued cooperation was essential if Hitler was to be kept in check."

“...we should have retained the friendship of Italy...”

- Duff Cooper, British Cabinet Minister

On April 11, 1935, Mussolini convened a summit of the three major European

victors of World War I (Britain, France and Italy) at Stresa – on Lago Maggiore – to forge a united front against German rearmament and expansionism. But Britain ignored the Duce's entreaties and subsequently signed the Anglo-German Naval Agreement on June 18 of the same year – even though Hitler's attempted annexation of Austria had flagrantly violated the Versailles Treaty. Both Italy and France, ignorant of the treaty talks, were appalled by Britain's unilateral action. It destroyed the spirit of Stresa in one stroke.

Had the Stresa Front held, Germany could have been contained and possibly demilitarized – ending Hitler's reign and the threat of Nazi aggression. And the world might have been spared a calamitous global war, the Holocaust and even the Cold War.

However, Britain's Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, developed an antipathy to Mussolini – owing to the Duce's role in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and Italy's conquest of Abyssinia (1935-1936) – and a perverse preference for Adolf Hitler. During a 1937 meeting with Neville Chamberlain, Eden explicitly stated that an agreement with the Fuhrer had “a chance of reasonable

life . . . whereas Mussolini is . . . a complete gangster.”

Duff Cooper, who served as Britain's War Secretary (1935) and First Lord of the Admiralty (1937), strongly believed that Anthony Eden had erred in alienating Italy. In his autobiography, *Old Men Forget*, Cooper faulted Eden's obduracy: “In any case, we should have retained the friendship of Italy; and the Axis, which was to prove the pivot of Hitler's assault upon Europe, and without which he could hardly have launched the second World War, would never have been formed.”

As for Austria, Hitler didn't attempt another Anschluss until 1938. By that year, the breach between Italy and the Allies had grown worse. Nevertheless, Hitler still feared Italian intervention. Just to make sure, Hitler asked Mussolini's permission to absorb Austria. Four years after his lonely stand, Mussolini saw the new realities of Europe and let Hitler know that he would not stand in his way this time. The Europe of 1934 was only a forgotten memory.

Tragically, the West missed its rendezvous with history.

[Ed. - Alfred Cardone assisted in researching this article]

This 1972 book should be a must-read for anyone who thinks Austria was Hitler's willing accomplice.



13th Apostle (continued from p.22)

major contributions to Christianity. Despite the emperor's incalculable support and guidance of the early Church, Constantine has never been recognized as a saint by Roman Catholicism. Some scholars contend that the Church's refusal to grant him sainthood stems from the fact that Constantine softened his opposition to Arianism later in life and chose to be baptized by an Arian bishop. It can also be argued that the Roman, or western Church, felt abandoned by Constantine's favoring the Greek or eastern Church with the new capital of the empire at Constantinople.

Notwithstanding, by his adoption of Christianity and his pursuit of various policies encouraging its growth, Constantine played a major role in transforming Christianity from a persecuted sect into the dominant religion of Europe and later the world.



The Arch of Constantine in Rome. Built to commemorate his many victories, the arch has much pagan symbolism sculpted on it but nothing Christian. The city was still the pagan capital.



THE 13TH APOSTLE

By Alfred Cardone

He was a pagan, not a Jew. He never knew Jesus Christ or cared much for his teachings. Yet there would be no Roman Catholic Church or Holy Land sites without him. Constantine the Great was considered the first Christian emperor of Rome, even though he was only baptized on his deathbed.

Despite establishing by force of his will the spiritual and temporal Church as we know it, Constantine is not numbered among the Vatican's saints. Rather it is the Greek Orthodox and eastern rites that worship him as one. Why the disparity? I shall try to answer that mystery later in this story.

He was born Flavius Valerius Constantinus on February 27, 272 AD in the military city of Naissus (modern Nis, Serbia) His father was Flavius Constantius, a high-ranking military officer and native of that region. His mother was a Bithynian (Turkey) Greek of humble origin who later became St. Helen. We cannot say if he had Italic blood. We can only suggest that the Flavian clan originally hailed from central Italy and that Roman Army veterans were settled in colonies throughout the three continents of the Roman domain. Another clue might be in Constantine's profile (the nose knows)

In any event, he was educated in the pagan Latin and Greek manner and followed his father into the military. As a young general, Constantine campaigned against barbarians on the Danube in 296 and fought the Persians in Syria and Mesopotamia (Iraq) from 297-299. Beginning in 303, he witnessed the "Great Persecution" of Christians under Emperor Diocletian. (It was Diocletian who divided the Roman Empire into east and west with each having its own co-emperor.) After Diocletian abdicated in 305, Constantine's father became emperor of the western half of the Roman Empire. One year later, his father died setting off a power struggle that pit Constantine against another western rival, Maxentius.

It was Constantine's victory over Maxentius at the battle of the Milvian Bridge (on Rome's Tiber River) in 312 that marks Constantine's association with Christianity. Before the battle, Constantine claimed to have seen a vision of a fiery cross in the sky along with the words "By this sign shalt thou conquer." It was not uncommon for Roman generals to inspire their men with the supernatural. He claimed that Christ appeared to him that night and told him to have his soldiers paint the cross on their shields before the battle.

With his eastern co-emperor Licinius, Constantine reversed the persecutions of Diocletian and issued the Edict of Milan in 313, which proclaimed religious tolerance throughout the Empire.

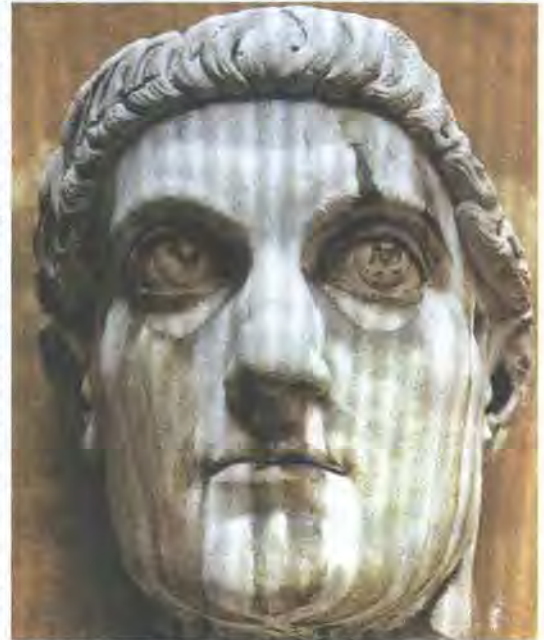
This edict removed the penalties for professing Christianity, provided for the return of Church property confiscated during the preceding persecution and established Sunday as a day of worship.

Despite these measures, Constantine never made Christianity the official state religion. He kept for himself the traditional pagan

title of Pontifex Maximus, head of the pagan priesthood, until his death. Interestingly, the Arch of Constantine, erected to celebrate his victory over Maxentius, contains no Christian symbolism but honors the pagan gods Victoria, Apollo, Diana and Hercules. He also continued the Sol Invictus and other pagan legends on his coinage and monuments as an expression of the eternal devotion of the Roman state religion.

Through his legislation and policies, however, Constantine did a great deal to encourage the growth of Christianity. Throughout his rule, he supported the church financially and promoted many Christians to high-ranking offices. It became clear that conversion to Christianity enhanced one's chances of success and advancement to high government positions. His decrees gave the Church special privileges and immunities, and gave a palace at the Lateran (pre-Vatican) to Pope Miltiades as a papal residence. Several of the world's most famous churches were either erected or commenced during Constantine's reign. These include the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and old St. Peter's Basilica in Rome at the location traditionally attributed to be the grave of St. Peter.

Considering himself to be their colleague, Constantine



Flavius Valerius Constantinus, Constantine the Great. He gave the Christian church freedom, order, structure, riches and power. The Vatican never honored him as a saint.

He was a pagan, not a Jew. He never knew Jesus Christ or cared much for his teachings. Yet there would be no Roman Catholic Church or Holy Land sites without him.

(Cont'd on p. 22)



Madoff (continued from p.17)

Pecora's legacy. In a January 5, 2009, Op-Ed piece in the *New York Times*, author Ron Chernow asked "Where is our Ferdinand Pecora?" And on the April 24, 2009, edition of his weekly PBS show, journalist Bill Moyers discussed Pecora's famous hearings with Michael Perino, an Italian American law professor at St. John's University in New York. But so far, the notorious hype which the American media routinely give to Italic outlaws has bypassed Pecora. Nor has the U.S. Congress yet repeated the Pecora investigations. Wall Street has managed to escape deep-

er public scrutiny.

Surely Dustin Hoffman would make a creditable Bernie Madoff in a Hollywood epic? Playwright David Mamet, who specializes in tough-guy schemers, could provide the pungent dialogue. Working title: "*Glen, Gary and Ross.*"

Instead, Mamet's current project is a script about Charles "Buddy" Cianci, the former mayor of Providence, Rhode Island who served jail time for petty graft. Talk about passing the buck, Mr. Mamet!

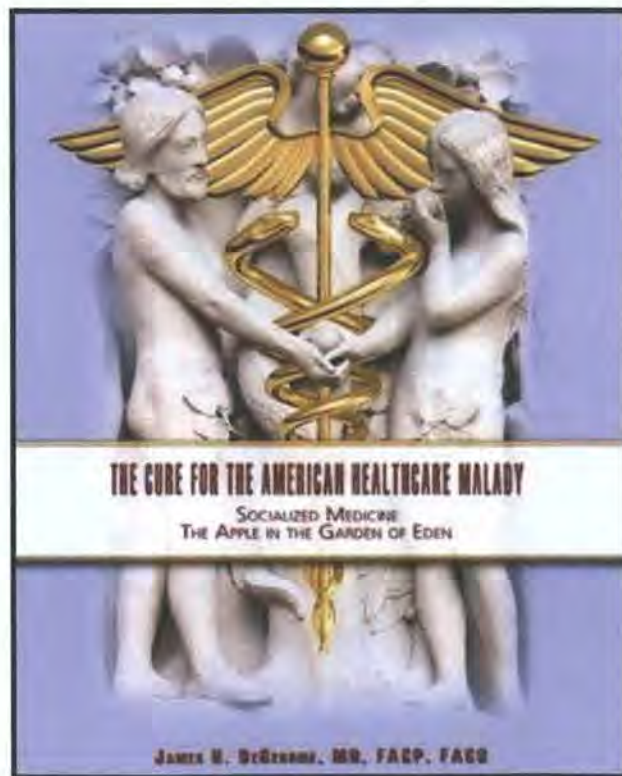
Italy (continued from p. 23)

new farmland as a reward for their service. The veterans brought their families or married into local families. Beside Roman DNA, the veterans brought coveted Roman citizenship. By the time of Augustus, all of Italy was Latin-speaking and politically unified. British historian Michael Grant states that the first major historical achievement of the Romans was "*the creation of Italy.*" Everyone from Macchiavelli to Garibaldi knew that. Garibaldi wrote of his Roman heritage, "*It was the dominant thought and inspiration of my whole life.*"

Little credit is given the Romans for their amazing feat of tying all the loose ends of Italy into a magnificent whole. Military conquest of its neighbors was not Rome's only tool. Nearly every tribe inhabiting the peninsula had a unique treaty with Rome. The Romans could be cruel masters but they were honorable ones willing to give and take as any relationship required. If there is one recurring theme in tribal Italian history it is the desire to join the Romans as equals, to achieve Roman citizenship. Rome created "*asabiya,*" as Peter Turchin uses the Arabic word for a spirit of cooperation in his book *War and Peace and War, The Life Cycles of Imperial Nations*. Turchin claims that southern Italians lost *asabiya* when Rome declined. Southern Italy became an "*asabiya black hole.*" For those who frequently observe that Italian Americans don't help each other, Turchin and other scholars agree and have a historical basis for the observation. "*By the*

fifth century, the Italian society, if we can still call it that, had lost any remnants of ability to act in a concerted manner. Italians did not serve in the legions or as government officials." (p.305) A large slave population, Church dominance and hosts of foreign conquerors replaced native Italic civic virtue. *Campanilismo*, literally the small world within earshot of a church bell, the parochial self-interest that is the hallmark of southern apathy, plagues us still in America. Would that we could revive our ancient mojo.

Nevertheless, let us celebrate Rome's gift to the world - Italy. Let March 1, 222 BC be our great holiday. Perhaps such an annual remembrance will someday restore our lost spirit of cooperation.



Dr. DeGerome's book is available on-line at Barnes & Noble or Amazon.

**IN MEMORY OF
REVEREND
ALFONSE M. ARMINIO
1929 - 2004
CHAPLAIN U.S. ARMY**

The Barzini Virus

by Louis Comaro

The curious mind forever ponders the origin of things. There is something satisfying in knowing the cause of a calamity even while suffering its ill effects. For those Italian Americans who take to heart the relentless Mafia image of their ethnicity you may take comfort in this revelation: We have identified the source of the virus that plagues us.

In 1964, Italian journalist Luigi Barzini published his landmark book, *The Italians*. It was a grabber of a title and became a must-read even for the book-fearing Italian American public. Few realize that Barzini was the inspiration for Mario Puzo's 1968 bestseller *The Godfather*. It was Barzini who wrote of Sicily's legendary Don Vito Cascio Ferro and wrote the words that Puzo would later immortalize as "an offer he can't refuse." Although Puzo did not openly admit his debt to Barzini, he did name two characters in *The Godfather* Don Vito Corleone and Don Barzini. Was Luigi amused by the "honor?"

[Just for the record, Barzini wrote of the real Mafia: "He (Don Vito Ferro) quickly emerged as a young man of great qualities. There was a natural aura of authority about him: people of all kinds found themselves obeying him without knowing why." And, "A day always comes when the Mafia also needs some favour in return. On that day, a man discovers he can no longer refuse."]

Barzini didn't do Italians a favor by writing his book. In fact, he wrote it in English to make a killing outside of Italy. The subtitle of *The Italians* is *A Full Length Portrait Featuring Their Manners and Morals*, giving the reader a hint of his agenda.

When one speaks of morals the message is "get ready for some dirt." Sure enough, the overriding theme of the book is Italians are clever, cunning and conniving to the point of genius. All Barzini's history and observations underscore his contention that Italians do their best work screwing each other or pulling the wool over everyone's eyes. He has an admiring contempt for his fellow Italians: "It is the Italian way of life which makes all laws and institutions function defectively." But, "the tenacity and the eagerness with which the individual pursues his private interests and defends himself from society...make(s) Italian life bearable..."

Barzini was born in Milan in 1908 into a media family. His father was the editor of the prestigious *Corriere della Sera*. At 24, he traveled to New York and acquired his fluency in English.

When the Fascists came to power in the 1920s Barzini was an avid supporter. He reportedly became disenchanted during the 1930s. Nevertheless, in 1937, he was an Italian correspondent aboard the U.S.S. Panay, in China, when it was attacked by Japanese warplanes.

On April 26, 1940, before Italy entered the war, Mussolini's son-in-law Galeazzo Ciano noted in his famous diary, "*Barzini, Jr., was arrested. From one of the usual documents shown to us at the British Embassy it appears that he had informed the British that we have a secret service operating effectively inside the embassy itself...*" Barzini a traitor? He doesn't even mention his alleged crime in his post-war rants against the Fascist regime. Nor does he admit directly to his punishment — five years of internal exile to a town on the coast of Tuscany. In *The Italians*, he only has this to say, "During the last few months of the last war, when Italy was the battleground of foreign armies and divided by civil war, I was living on a lonely part of the coast of Tuscany, near Porto Santo Stefano." Shouldn't his exile have been a badge of



Luigi Barzini - Many consider his insights into the Italian character as pure genius. Time has allowed us to see what he unleashed.

honor?

One could argue that Barzini, as an elder statesman of Italian journalism and world traveler, has more insight than other Italians and Italian Americans. Indeed, much of what Barzini says rings true. Many of his observations are confirmed in the international news, as reported in such papers of record as the *New York Times*. (*The Times'* correspondents often manage to squeeze in the blanket stereotype phrase, "In a land where...", pick one, "...nobody pays taxes," "...traffic lights are only a suggestion.") Nevertheless, Barzini is easily caught cooking the books. His

chapter on the Sicilian Mafia is more a paean to its power, its doctrine and its heroes than any book before him. It is easy to see how Barzini seduced Puzo when he called Don Vito Ferro "...a shining example for all times." Or how Don Vito brought "order and discipline" to

the prison that the Fascists locked him up in. For whatever reason, Barzini must appear to be an anti-Fascist, then, now and forever. The Fascists who finally cleaned up Sicily are dismissed as "...employing Mafia-like methods, disregarding all written laws and striking terror in the heart of everyone." Surely, someone in Sicily was grateful for Mussolini's attention to this perennial scourge. Barzini doesn't even acknowledge that the fall of Fascism and the American occupation of Sicily resurrected the Mafia. He leaves the reader with the hackneyed impression that the Mafia is a secret government based upon

(Cont'd on p. 24)

Barzini's contention is that Italians do their best work screwing each other or pulling the wool over everyone's eyes.



13th Apostle (continued from p.19)

not only recognized the Christian bishops as counselors of state but gradually granted them their own court system. He freed Christian soldiers for religious services, recognized bequests to the Church and organized religious services for Christians in his palace. He gradually became involved in most of the Church's affairs and even wrote to the Persian King Sapor urging him to show toleration for the Christians under his rule.

By 317, tensions began to mount between co-emperors Constantine and Licinius. Civil war broke out between them in 324, eventually leading to Constantine's sole rule of a reunited Empire. That same year he ordered the rebuilding and expansion of the old Greek city of Byzantium to commemorate his victory.

Believing that religious disputes were contributing to instability in the Empire, Constantine strove to establish a single Christian orthodoxy and uniform worship. At this time, the Church faced a major theological struggle with the rise of Arianism in Alexandria. This early heresy challenged the Church's official position, as championed by Bishop Athanasius, regarding the very nature of Jesus Christ in relation to God the Father. Bishop Arius and his followers rejected the Church's concept of the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus. According to the followers of Arius, Jesus was a figurative son who was neither co-eternal nor co-divine with God the Father.

In order to resolve this major theological dispute, Constantine summoned the bishops of the Empire to attend a general council in Nicaea (Turkey) in 325. This represented the

...that the emperor still maintained relations with a bishop who denied Christ's divinity troubled many Church fathers.

first attempt to achieve consensus in the Church through a gathering representing all of Christendom. The emperor set the tone for the Council of Nicaea with a discourse and presided over its deliberations. The Council resulted in the first uniform Christian doctrine through the formulation of the Nicene Creed. This set an important precedent for future ecumenical councils of Bishops to define Church doctrine through official statements of belief. Roman Catholics still recite a version of this Creed: "*We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible...*"

The Council addressed the nature of Jesus Christ by overwhelmingly deciding against the Arian heresy. The official Church position as maintained by Athanasius was upheld, and the Greek term *homoousios* or con-substantial (with the Father) was accepted as the key to defining the divinity of Christ. The Council declared that the Father and the Son are co-eternal and of the same substance. Some attribute the term con-substantial to Constantine himself who chose to intervene to help resolve this



Before there was St. Peter's, the Emperor Constantine planned Hagia Sophia in New Rome (Constantinople, then Istanbul). It is now a mosque.

based upon existing Roman provinces.

Byzantium was designated as the emperor's new capital and inaugurated as New Rome (later Constantinople) on May 11, 330. The construction of pagan temples was allowed in the new city. However, Constantine forbade the introduction of Rome's Vestal cult and the colleges of pagan priests. He generally made an effort to give the new city a Christian character by building or commencing several major churches including plans for the basilica of the Holy Wisdom (*Hagia Sophia*). Constantinople became one of the great cities of the world and remained the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire until it fell to the Turks in 1453. It is now called Istanbul.

In the spring of 337, Constantine became severely ill. In accordance with a widespread custom of the times, Constantine was baptized on his deathbed in Nicomedia (Turkey) by the Arian bishop Eusebius. That the emperor still maintained relations with a bishop who denied Christ's divinity troubled many Church fathers.

* * *

Although Christianity had survived persecution and sought converts, its success as a new faith in the Empire remained limited at the beginning of the fourth century. It is estimated that there were no more than 70 or 80,000 Christians in the city of Rome, and most of these were of no great political or social significance. The vast majority of Constantine's subjects were pagans, and it is doubtful if Christianity would have enjoyed such dramatic success without his vigorous support and endorsement as emperor. Without the emergence of a Christian emperor, the conversion of the Roman world to Christianity would have taken a very long time, if ever. Instead, within a century of Constantine, this minor creed became the predominant religion of the most diverse empire in the world.

The Byzantine liturgical calendar observed by the Eastern Orthodox Church includes both Constantine and his mother Helen as saints. In fact, in the Eastern Church Constantine has been named as the "Thirteenth Apostle." The Roman Catholic Church only reveres Constantine as "The Great" in recognition of his

controversy. It was also decided when Easter should be celebrated and that the date should be independent of the Hebrew calendar. The Council promulgated twenty new Church laws and delineated Church dioceses

(Cont'd on p. 18)



ROME CREATES ITALY

South Italy Finds its "Mojo"

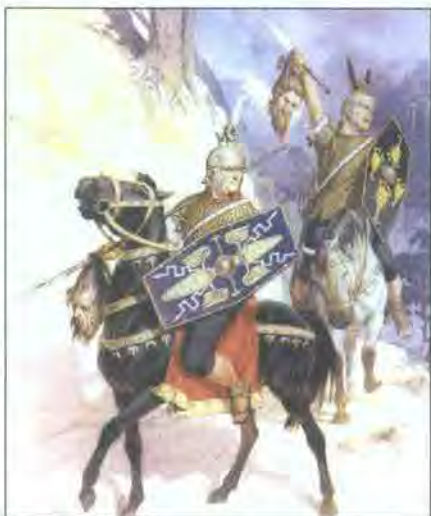
by John Mancini

If there is one event that is a total mystery to Italian Americans, and even some Italians, it is how Italy came into being. The usual answer is that Italy began when the Roman Empire collapsed (476 AD). A more modern version has it that Italy was first united by Garibaldi in 1860. Each of these answers begs the question: what was there before?

Believe it or not, Italy took its modern form one year before the unification of China. If we were to put a specific date on it, Italy should celebrate March 1, 222 BC as its birth date. It was on that date that Roman Consul Marcus Claudius Marcellus was given a triumph in Rome for defeating the last Celts of northern Italy and personally slaying their leader. Italy had reached the Alps. The memory of this great victory is still carried in the Italian name Marcello.

Hannibal's invasion and three civil wars, a period of some two hundred years, delayed the full political and cultural integration of Italians into a true nation-state. Nevertheless, Italy reached its current bor-

Roman Consul Marcellus slew the Celtic commander in personal combat, the only such feat in Roman history. That battle brought Italy to the Alps.



ders before the time of Christ. Our own USA traces its unity to July 4, 1776 but only reached today's borders in 1898 with the annexation of Hawaii. In between there was the Mexican War (1846-48), the Civil War (1861-65), and the end of slavery (1865).

The importance of the year 222 BC is not merely in defining a border. It marked the foundation of a national unity that was able to withstand twelve bloody years of occupation by Hannibal and achieve total victory at a cost that would have bled white any other ancient power. That victory, more than any other in Roman history, proved the words of Italy's ancient poet Virgil, that Rome's success came from "Roman stock allied to Italian courage." Rome and Italy were joined at the hip. A city can't conquer the world but a nation can, and did.

As luck would have it, an ancient Greek left us detailed information to prove this very point. Even more fortuitously, the date of the statistics you are about to read are from 225 BC, just three

years prior to Italy's birth date and four years prior to Hannibal's invasion of Italy. They demonstrate clearly that the so-called might of Rome was truly that of Italy.

From historian Polybius (Po-LIB-bee-us) we learn that the military forces available to Rome in 225 BC totaled 730,000 infantry and 72,700 cavalry. Hundreds of thousands of these troops were provided by kindred people in the regions of Lazio, Campania, Calabria, Molise, Abruzzi, Umbria, Basilicata, the

If we were to put a specific date on it, Italy should celebrate March 1, 222 BC as its birth date.

Marche and Puglia. Added to these were Etruscans from Tuscany and troops from Sicily. Polybius lists their mostly forgotten tribal names: Samnites, Marsi, Marrucini, Frentani, Vestini, Lucanians, Umbrians, Sarsinates, Messapians, and so on.

These were the allies who would soon drive out the Celts from northern Italy and contest Hannibal when he crosses the Alps to ravage Italy for more than a decade.

"Besides these resources of manpower, the Roman military organization was undergirded by the economic resources of Italy," writes Gary Forsythe in *A Critical History of Early Rome*.

Anyone who minimizes or discounts the Italian component in the history of Rome knows little of Roman history.

After the victory over the Celts in 222 BC, Rome established the colonies of Cremona and Piacenza on either side of the Po River to romanize their new domain. This was the same method used throughout southern Italy, utilizing army veterans settled on

(Cont'd on p. 20)

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Did *The Godfather* author Mario Puzo pay homage to his mentor by naming Vito Corleone's nemesis Don Barzini? Here, Barzini is played by veteran actor Richard Conte (clapping).

popular justice, not just a bunch of thieves and murderers. Had Barzini lived into this century he would know the power of a terrorist organization to control whole nations.

Describing Italian American progress in this country, Barzini subscribes to the Mob-to-the-Rescue School of thought. Again, the Mafia was needed to defend the oppressed Sicilian Americans. [One wonders if Barzini could wax nostalgic for the KKK were he a southerner oppressed by Union carpetbaggers. Funny, the irony hadn't occurred to him.] Mario Puzo must have taken copious notes when Barzini wrote: "(Sicilians) discovered that the ancient arts (i.e., lies and deception) were far more useful in America and went farther. The Americans were generally trustful, unprepared to defend themselves from guile..." These 'ancient arts', according to Barzini, were old rules that all Sicilians and Italians follow: "[The rules] are not per se dishonest, but they can be employed effectively for the achievement of dishonest ends...They helped many honest Sicilians in the United States and their descendants to reach higher and higher rungs in the social ladder." Wow! Are we dealing with Sicilians or alien body snatchers? Barzini's convoluted logic is worthy of a Talmudic debate.

The trouble with Barzini is that he didn't do much research here in America. By some oversight he left out the mass lynching in 1891 of eleven Sicilians in New Orleans by those "generally trustworthy" Americans. Nor did he note the forced expulsion of 10,000 Italian Americans from the West Coast in 1942. He mistakes sweat for guile. Hard work and sacrifice pulled Italian Americans (that means Sicilians, too) up the ladder. And many a brick was carried as well. It has been Barzini's guile and the "old rules" of people like him, Mario Puzo and Frankie Coppola in particular, that have made the ladder to the top so rickety. It was these masters of word and image that have transformed the dark ravens of our community into an albatross around our necks. Barzini, as an interpreter of Italian culture, should have heeded the advice of Aesclypius: "First, do no harm."

To be consistent, Luigi Barzini also did no favors for his own countrymen. He rightly addresses the image problem Italians

had dating back to the Renaissance when skullduggery was loose in the land and reported back to the nobles of England, France and the Germanic states. But, in his own version of history, he perpetuates the same image problem today. To anyone with any knowledge of history, Barzini seems to miss every instance of chicanery, double-dealing and outright criminal behavior outside of Italy. He conveniently overlooked England's murderous Henry VIII or that the notorious Borgias were a Spanish family residing in Italy. It is as though he is firmly convinced that only Italians bend rules, subvert justice and botch things up. Government to him is perfect and logical everywhere but Italy. Society is just and open everywhere but Italy. Humans are honest and straightforward everywhere but Italy. How can anyone so cosmopolitan get it so wrong? Could he have been just another Italian out to trash his heritage for money? But that would be so un-Italian, wouldn't it?

He dismisses Italy's First World War victory at Vittorio Veneto in the most cavalier terms: "...the army triumphed over their broken-down and dispirited Austrian and Hungarian enemies." That Italians had lost 600,000 men during three years of war and ended it by capturing 400,000 prisoners including Germans in a six day battle, the only field victory on the Allied side, was merely a fluke for Barzini who avoided military service in the next war. He further subtracts enough out of twenty years of Fascism, during which Italy's reunification was completed and industrialization achieved, to

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report that nothing was accomplished except Italy's ruin and the creation of Vatican City. Such is the deep analytical nature of the remarkable Mr. Barzini. The Italian translation of *The Italians* angered many *paesani* who felt his tome would foment contempt for Italy among foreigners. Nevertheless, our author went on to publish his next great evisceration of his homeland in 1971, a book with the not so surprising title, *From Caesar to the Mafia*.

Before *The Italians*, "Don" Luigi did write about the United States, a 1953 book entitled *Americans Are Alone in the World*. It launched his rambling style of quoting famous people and current events to make a point. Although his premise may have been valid, that the American government often acts on fear and ignores the wisdom of older nations, he avoided assassinating the American character. He scrupulously steered clear of such historical embarrassments as slavery, Jim Crow laws, lynchings, U.S. imperialism, and widespread poverty. Americans, unlike his own severely flawed people, were only burdened with naivete and a stubborn-



(Cont'd on p. 16)

After he was caught passing information to the British in 1940, Barzini was exiled to the Tuscan coast - Porto Santo Stefano. Treason was not punished so lightly in other countries.



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