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Income political

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→ copy WED. FCO.

Dear Roger

1. The 'vicenda' Cirillo which began with the kidnapping of the nationally, save in his own party (DC), unknown politician and the killing of two of his escort, differed from its outset from anything which has happened before. Forewarned by threats which, following the assassination last August of the young DC assessor Pino Amato, have been taken seriously, there were most elaborate precautions to avoid such an incident. Unlike Moro he regularly travelled in a bullet proof vehicle, ^{at} the timings of his departures and his route and invariably at the end of the homeward run left his car when inside the garage - which was where the gang awaited him - and approached his apartment by an inside stairway.
2. In two more important ways however the affair has been remarkable: firstly the exceptionally little attention which, after the first impact of the crime, it has received from the media, even locally. Secondly the indifference with which it has been regarded by Neapolitans generally. The press attitude may be attributable to police pressure to play down sensation about the terrorists' messages, though we have no direct evidence to support the theory. Public indifference, which may in itself have played a part in this has been very clearly demonstrated and is much more easily explicable. Protest demonstrations which have featured after almost every major terrorist action were extremely muted; even the funerals of his escort - less understandably - were poorly attended.
3. The plain fact emerges that Ciro Cirillo, though affable to meet and undoubtedly both capable and dynamic - a prominent Socialist once remarked to me about him during his Presidency of the Region that he was "a ladrone but undoubtedly the most effective president so far" - he represents the epitome of what has disillusioned so many people here about the DC leadership. Their initial shock and instinctive feelings of compassion were accordingly somewhat tempered. His career under the wing of Antonio Gava, probably the most notorious of DC local politicians during the past 20 years, has been one of steady progress, from Mayor of Torre del Greco to Provincial President; finally in 1979 to the top job in the Region after 4 years in his most recent post as Assessore for Town and County Planning to which he returned after being ousted from the Presidency in 1980 due to his corrente's loss of ascendancy within the party. His reputation in direct contrast to that of Alfo Moro for corruption is as wide as it is scandalous. His substantial fortune - he is

ladrone:
a thief



undeniably a man of property - has allegedly been built up through the systematic acceptance of substantial bribes and the delivery of votes in return for licences for the local camorra specializing in building speculation. Certainly the unplanned nature of much of the more recent construction in his home town of Torre del Greco would seem to provide evidence pointing towards irregularities.

4. The reason why he was selected as the victim of this operation however is almost certainly because of his key position as Vice Chairman of the Technical Committee for reconstruction in the earthquake areas of Campania Region. Indeed the kidnapping seems to have a far more logical objective than the usual strike against the Establishment. The ransom for Cirillo's safe return is substantial requisitioning of unoccupied premises for the accommodation of homeless Neapolitans. Furthermore it might appear to have been inspired by local extremists even though carried out by highly professional and ruthless outsiders since slogans issued in the first communiqué used the same phraseology as that expressed repeatedly by the Banchi Nuovi* who confronted the Minister for Labour, Foschi, in March and extracted a promise of 10,000 jobs. There is also the feeling that while the kidnapping typified the style of the Red Brigade hard core the subsequent handling of the affair was been awkward and inefficient by comparison and thus quite likely to have been taken over by locals. Be that as it may, they, whoever they are, have to date, as far as we know, given few clues as to their whereabouts. Though there was apparently a tip off about two weeks ago that the hideout was in the area of Vesuvius an extensive operation proved abortive.

5. Meanwhile it seems very unlikely that the terrorists' demand will be satisfied. The Mayor took steps within weeks of the earthquake to examine the possibilities of acquiring unoccupied accommodation, but as soon as the news got out landlords of such apartments took steps to get someone into them. Even where they could not the majority managed through legal procrastination or raccomandazioni to avoid requisition. Out of 40,000 - probably an unrealistic figure anyhow - originally listed by SUNIA, the tenants syndicate, only some 200 have been acquired and, though the process continues it is moving only slowly.

6. Few people even amongst his colleagues and staff at the Region think Cirillo will come out alive. They mainly fear that the inexperience of his kidnapers might at some point lead to a nervous reaction fatal for him.

* whose leaders have however indignantly denied any association



7. In conclusion, though the operation seems to have logical motives it is also being read as part of a Red Brigade effort to exploit discontent and get a foothold in the earthquake areas. It is a sign which the authorities especially in Naples would be unwise to ignore. I very much doubt nevertheless if there is much to fear. The people in these parts are too wise or perhaps too cynical to imagine that much could be gained by following them.

J D Campbell