SIX —— Atomic Ambivalence

Italy's Evolving Attitude toward Nuclear Weapons

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Homeland to some of the pioneers of nuclear physics, Italy never developed its own nuclear arsenal.1 Throughout the Cold War, the country played host to American nuclear weapons as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, as many of its leaders viewed Italy's nuclear role as a source of international prestige. Indeed, at one time the Italian government considered collaborating with France and Germany to create a nuclear capability independent of the United States, and only after some delay did Italy ratify the Nonproliferation Treaty, committing itself to permanent non-nuclear status. Through much of the postwar era, Italy's governments-dominated by the center-right Christian-Democratic Party-sought to preserve a "seat at the table" on nuclear policy. They viewed Italy's involvement in NATO nuclear planning as a means of doing so. Opposition parties wielded little influence on nuclear issues, the Communists in particular hobbled by their adherence to the Soviet Union's line on foreign policy. Yet elements of civil society, particularly Italian scientists, began to exercise some impact in dampening the government's enthusiasm for nuclear weapons. Although the Italian government continued to seek a role in NATO nuclear decision making and even welcomed the deployment of US cruise missiles in the early 1980s, public anti-nuclear sentiments began to grow. The end of the Cold War allowed for Italy's position on nuclear weapons to correspond better to popular attitudes and the country's overall preference for a pacific foreign policy. But the combination of single-party dominance of the center-right through much of the Cold War and the reluctance of the centerleft to take security policy seriously left its mark on Italy's attitude towards nuclear weapons into the twenty-first century.

The issue of nuclear weapons adds several new elements to the question of Italy as a middle power and the role of perception and self-perception. First, nuclear weapons would appear to confer a special status on the states that possess them. The original nuclear powers—the United States and the Soviet Union—become known as "superpowers," in part because of their exclusive access to nuclear capabilities. The next three states to acquire nuclear weapons—the United Kingdom, France, and China—are the remaining three of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (although the People's Republic of China did not replace Taiwan at the United Nations or on the Council until 1971). Even though France and the UK are probably the quintessential "middle powers," one could argue that their possession of nuclear weapons in combination with permanent membership in the Security Council conveys a somewhat higher status than typical middle powers enjoy. It was the prospect that Italy could secure its position as a middle power, and move closer to the status enjoyed by France, that drove its leaders to seek something approximating an Italian finger on the nuclear buttonor at least a seat at the nuclear table-throughout much of the postwar period.

That much of Italy's status as a middle power is a matter of perceptions and self-perceptions, as the chapter by Giacomello and Verbeek claims, seems amply demonstrated by the nuclear case. Indeed, one might even suggest that self-delusion played a certain role. One way of reading the transition in Italy's approach to nuclear weapons from the late 1940s until, say, the late 1980s is as an increasing realization that nuclear weapons do not convey any special prestige on their possessors when the use of such weapons of mass destruction could bring charges of recklessness and genocide. The change in perception of nuclear weapons from something desired to something feared and shunned can be attributed mainly to domestic critics of nuclear weapons in Italy and their transnational counterparts.

The editors of this volume have made the case that the end of the Cold War and the bipolar era and increasing globalization have led to important changes in the making of Italian foreign policy. The examples they cite include: a growing prominence of the public, reflecting its awareness of the domestic impact of international politics in a globalized world; an increasing role for junior parties in coalition government and their disproportionate influence on policy; and some uncertainty about the importance of individuals and small groups in policymaking. In this respect we might understand the issue-area of nuclear weapons as representing a precursor to many of the changes that the editors associate with the end of the Cold War. Certainly one can understand nuclear weapons as sig-

nifying globalization avant la lettre. What could be more globalized than the threat of global destruction? In the case of nuclear weapons, the mobilization of the public to influence the realm of foreign policy predated the end of bipolarity and the Cold War, and—as the discussion below described—was particularly apparent in the 1980s. As for the influence of junior coalition partners and individuals, the narrative below highlights the importance of those factors for a key development in Italy's nuclear policy—the decision to ratify the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. In short, the nuclear case exemplifies many of this volume's generalizations about Italy as a middle power.

FASCISM AND WAR AS BACKGROUND TO ITALY'S ATOMIC ATTITUDES

At the dawn of the nuclear era, Italy occupied a prominent position in nuclear physics. In the first half of the 1930s, under the leadership of the young Enrico Fermi, the Institute of Physics in Rome played a major role in the development of the new field. Ironically, just as Italian physics received worldwide recognition, with Fermi's award of the Nobel Prize in 1938, the "gruppo di via Panisperna" - named after the Rome address of the institute-was disintegrating, thanks to the policies of the fascist regime and the looming threat of war in Europe. Fermi took the occasion of the ceremony in Stockholm to move himself and his family first to Copenhagen, where he worked with Niels Bohr, and then on to the United States, where they settled permanently. Many of the "ragazzi di via Panisperna" who constituted Fermi's research group—including such luminaries as Emilio Segrè and Bruno Pontecorvo-had already left Italy, in the face of the anti-Semitic racial laws, for political reasons, or both. The only major figure who remained was Edoardo Amaldi. Despite his antifascist inclinations, Amaldi elected to stay in Italy to try to salvage what he could of Italy's excellence in nuclear research—and to make sure that it was not applied to military purposes.2

In Italy in 1945 political and military leaders were too preoccupied with coping with the aftermath of the last war to spend much time musing about future ones. Italy's role in the Second World War left it in an unenviable position following the surrender of Nazi Germany in May 1945. The fascist dictatorship of Benito Mussolini had initially allied the country with Hitler's Germany as Italy carried out its own agglessive military adventures from Ethiopia to Greece and Albania, and fought on the Eastern Front against the Soviet Union. As the Allies made headway during 1943 in the North African campaign, and invaded Sicily in July of that year, the *Gran Consiglio del Fascismo* deposed Mussolini. His successor, General Pietro Badoglio, secretly signed an armistice with the Allies which was announced on 8 September 1943. At that point the German

Wehrmacht turned on the Italian armed forces and disarmed them or forced them to fight on the Axis side. Other Italian troops and naval forces fought with the Allies, while forces of the Resistance carried out guerrilla warfare in the North. The Germans staged a rescue of Mussolini and reestablished him as head of a new Nazi puppet state, the Italian Social Republic (Repubblica Sociale Italiana or RSI), with its Foreign Ministry headquartered in Salò, a small town on Lake Garda. Brutal warfare continued through the spring of 1945, with multiple governments—the RSI, the Resistance, the Badoglio government, and German and Allied occupying forces—all vying for political control. The experience left deep divisions among the Italian people and little inclination to contemplate future wars, with or without nuclear weapons.

STATUS-SEEKING AND SECRECY AS HALLMARKS OF ITALIAN NUCLEAR POLICY

The first task for the postwar Italian government was to lose its status as defeated co-belligerent of Nazi Germany and gain acceptance by the victorious Allies—and perhaps regain its perceived status as middle power between the emerging superpowers. The peace treaty signed at Paris in February 1947 accomplished the first part of that task in some measure, but Italy still had to wait until 1955 to enter the United Nations Organization. Only with the support of the United States did Italy become a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on its founding in April 1949—a decision supported by Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi and his governing Christian-Democratic Party, but denounced by the opposition socialists and communists.

As Leopoldo Nuti has described, much of Italy's postwar effort to reestablish its international status became associated with its policy toward nuclear weapons. As the United States made nuclear deterrence a centerpiece of NATO defense, Italy's government came to see nuclear weapons as a potential source of prestige. Because Italy's nuclear physicists, following the example of Amaldi, avoided military-related research, early postwar Italian nuclear policy was dominated by military officials and politicians with little understanding of the meaning of the nuclear revolution. In his writings in the first pre-nuclear decades of the 20th century,3 Giulio Douhet had emphasized strategic bombing of population centers—a purpose, however dubious from a legal or ethical standpoint, to which nuclear weapons seemed well suited. Yet, Italian military planners, to the extent they gave serious attention to using nuclear weapons, envisioned their use in support of military operations, especially as US tactical nuclear weapons began to be deployed in Europe in the early to mid-1950s.4 Nuti found, from his review of articles in military journals, that Italian strategists contemplated, for example, nuclear attacks to prevent a Soviet invasion through Austria or Yugoslavia. They thought that in order to cross the mountain passes, Soviet tanks and armored divisions would assemble in mass formations in the Alpine valleys leading to the passes—posing valuable targets for atomic attack. Given that many of the weapons considered were vastly more powerful than the bombs that flattened Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the consequences for the surrounding territory and population—even if these areas were not particularly densely populated—could have been disastrous.⁵

Yet, the scientists at this stage did not involve themselves in nuclear policy. Decisions relating to nuclear weapons and military policy in general were controlled by a narrow circle of government officials. Indeed, given the polarization in Italian politics of the immediate postwar period between the Christian-Democratic Party and its partners, closely allied to the United States, and the generally pro-Soviet Left, it is not surprising that the US-backed governments endeavored to keep nuclear policy out of the political domain altogether. Such a situation "generated in public opinion a diffuse apathy regarding atomic problems," as the physicist Enrico Persico put it in late 1946.6 In subsequent years, aside from the parliamentary debate on NATO membership, military policy—let alone nuclear weapons—received little public attention.

Marco De Andreis has argued that the postwar Italian Constitution effectively sheltered foreign and security policy from public scrutiny. Membership in NATO gave the government an excuse to describe potentially controversial military decisions as "ordinary measures, stemming from the Treaty itself." As a consequence, in De Andreis's words, "governments followed a long-standing Italian tradition of adopting a pattern of military secrecy so pervasive as to exclude outsiders (parliamentarians, journalists, scholars) from any meaningful discussion of defence matters." Attempts to challenge the legacy of secrecy emerged at key points, often associated with planned deployments of new nuclear weapons.

During the 1950s and early 1960s the United States introduced into Italy and other European countries so-called tactical nuclear weapons and nuclear-armed air defense systems (Nike-Hercules), which, if used in war, would have destroyed what they were supposed to defend. Short-range nuclear missiles (Honest John) were deployed starting in 1957 and Atomic Demolition Munitions in the 1960s. As part of NATO's Southern European Task Force (SETAF), Italian troops received training in nuclear operations from US military specialists. Italian military operational doctrine (series "600") came into compliance by 1958 with NATO's strategy of "massive retaliation," as represented in MC-14/2.8 It was premised on early, extensive use of nuclear weapons in the event of war in Europe.

Italian politicians were not so much concerned about that prospect. Consistent with Nuti's account, they saw Italy's embrace of nuclear weapons in political terms as a way to raise the country's status, some-

times in cooperation with, but other times in competition with, its European allies. In the former category, Paolo Emilio Taviani, Italy's defense minister, worked with his French and German counterparts, Jacques Chaban-Delmas and Franz Joseph Strauss, respectively, in the wake of the 1956 Suez Crisis and perceptions of US unreliability, to plan for collaboration between the three countries on "modern" military technology—primarily missiles and nuclear weapons. Nuti quotes a French summary of a meeting where German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer told French Prime Minister Guy Mollet that "we must unite against the Americans" and demand what we want, namely, in the words of the Italian defense minister, "all the secrets that the Russians already have." The attempt at tripartite cooperation in defiance of the Americans fizzled when France under Charles de Gaulle decided to develop its own nuclear arsenal in 1958.

With the French decision to pursue its independent force de frappe, Italian politicians feared that Italy would be relegated to second-class status in the alliance because it did not possess its own nuclear arms. Thus, when the United States proposed to deploy nuclear missiles in Italy in 1958, officials were eager to accept them. In March 1958, General Lauris Norstad, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, sent General Nino Pasti, Italy's representative to the Atlantic Council, on a mission to Rome. He was to convey to Italy's defense minister documents concerning the possible deployment of new intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBM), known as Jupiters, on Italian soil. The deployment was supposed to proceed "as quietly as possible," in keeping with the Italian government's reluctance to turn popular apathy about nuclear weapons into anxiety, and should avoid the "Red" areas of the country where communists could organize opposition. Italian leaders evidently believed that exposing their country to risk of Soviet nuclear attack against the US bases had earned Italy a seat at the table for negotiations on major issues such as the "German question" and the fate of Berlin. 11

Yet, the government was unable to keep the issue quiet. As the time for deployment approached, "political pressure mounted in Parliament to discuss the IRBM issue," resulting in what De Andreis has called "the second major debate on Italian security policy," after the one on NATO membership in 1949. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies spent five days in April 1958 debating the issue, and the Senate, meeting in plenary session, spent an additional three days on the topic, with participation by the prime minister and the foreign minister. The government managed to carry out the deployment without revealing the terms of the agreement with the Americans—essentially a "dual-key" arrangement where American and Italian officers were required formally to approve the launch of the missiles (each by physically inserting a key). 12

The Jupiter deployment to Italy was a short-lived one. The Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 called attention to the presence of intermediate-range ballistic missiles in Europe targeted against the Soviet Union. In effect, the United States and its allies had for years been posing the same type of nuclear threat to the USSR that Nikita Khrushchev, with the attempted secret deployment of missiles to Cuba, had tried to do to the United States. The attempt at secrecy failed, as US spy planes detected the missiles. A better-kept secret helped resolve the crisis. The US government promised Khrushchev that it would remove the IRBMs stationed in Turkey, on the USSR's border, once the Soviet missiles left Cuba—as long as the decision was not made public. 13 The Kennedy administration considered the Jupiter missiles, in Turkey and Italy, obsolete anyway, and had planned to remove them. It worried, however, that a unilateral US decision to remove the missiles-whose deployment was decided by the NATO alliance as a whole-would damage US-Turkish relations and the Atlantic Alliance itself, especially if the removal took place as a quid pro quo imposed by the USSR. The administration might have anticipated difficulties in arranging the removal of the Italian Jupiters as well. More conservative elements in the Italian government were reluctant to part with the weapons, yet representatives of the non-communist Left were sympathetic to East-West efforts to moderate the arms race and willing to let the Jupiters go-a position that helped them gain the confidence of the US administration in their subsequent efforts to join with the Christian-Democrats in governing coalitions. 14

As if in return for its cooperative attitude in retiring the Jupiters, Italy found itself invited to join NATO's Nuclear Planning Group when it was established in December 1965. Moreover, Italian officials served at high levels in the Alliance during the 1960s—Manlio Brosio as secretary-general from 1964 to 1971, and Nino Pasti (Norstad's envoy to Rome for the Jupiter deployment request), deputy supreme allied commander for Europe (SACEUR) for nuclear affairs. ¹⁵ Those in the Italian government who considered involvement in nuclear policy an indispensable element of international prestige and middle-power status could, during these years, also anticipate some direct participation in the Multilateral Force (MLF), a scheme for involving Italians and others in a European-based naval nuclear force.

ORIGINS OF SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT IN NUCLEAR POLICY

Efforts to create a NATO nuclear force operated by multinational crews foundered on numerous practical issues, aside from concern about German participation. Moreover, it seemed to contradict growing sentiment for bringing the proliferation of nuclear weapons under control. In the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the United States and the Soviet Union

began to work together on reducing the danger posed by nuclear weapons. In 1963 they signed a Limited Test Ban Treaty, to forbid testing of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, under water, and in outer space (but allowing its continuation, and even acceleration, underground). In 1968, the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty sought to prevent the "horizontal" spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries. Next, the superpowers engaged in bilateral Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) to limit the "vertical" dimension of the competition. The failure of the SALT process to achieve any meaningful disarmament or even to encompass nuclear weapons deployed in and around Europe led to a major crisis in the NATO alliance over how to respond to the deployment of Soviet SS-20 missiles. The period between the failure of the MLF and the deployment of a new generation of US missiles in the early 1980s marks the emergence of greater societal influence on Italian nuclear policy—both at the elite and popular levels.

At the elite level, the 1960s witnessed the beginning of public discussion of Italy's nuclear status in professional journals and in books. A leading participant was the diplomat Roberto Gaja, who published two important works under a pseudonym, Roberto Guidi, and several under his own name. He was a strong proponent of a nuclear option for Italy as part of a European nuclear force. ¹⁶ Others who held similar views included Achille Albonetti, a high official at the National Committee for Nuclear Energy who played a key role in the development of civilian nuclear energy through the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM). ¹⁷ Such officials, and others in the foreign and defense ministries, represented a conservative force wanting to keep Italy's nuclear options open. By counterbalancing a growing popular antipathy to nuclear weapons, they helped maintain Italy's position of atomic ambivalence.

The 1960s also saw the growing involvement of Italian nuclear physicists in debates over nuclear policy. Edoardo Amaldi had been an early member of the Pugwash movement of scientists, founded in 1957 by Bertrand Russell, Albert Einstein, and Joseph Rotblat. He influenced a younger generation of physicists to get involved. Francesco Calogero, who was conducting physics research in the United States during the Cuban Missile Crisis, returned to Italy determined to do something about the nuclear peril that he experienced so directly in October 1962. Along with Amaldi, he joined with his former schoolmate and fellow physicist Carlo Schaerf to found the Italian branch of the Pugwash movement in 1965. Schaerf, inspired by participation with Amaldi at the Enrico Fermi International School of Physics, a summer course in Varenna, put forward a proposal for what soon became the International School on Disarmament and Research on Conflicts (ISODARCO), in effect, the teaching arm of Pugwash. 19

In addition to seeking to educate the broader public about the nuclear danger and how to cope with it, some of the physicists sought to influence policy directly. Amaldi expressed concern for proliferation of nuclear weapons as early as 1965, alarmed by China's first successful nuclear test the year before. ²⁰ In the second half of the 1960s Calogero served as head of the Study Group on Disarmament Policy at Rome's Institute for International Affairs. ²¹ While continuing their support for control of the vertical nuclear arms race, the scientists were among the first to endorse proposals for a treaty to stem horizontal proliferation.

In the Italian political debate, the leading advocate for the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty—even as the Soviet Union and United States were still working on a draft in 1967—was the small Italian Republican Party (PRI) led by Ugo La Malfa. La Malfa's efforts received support from the scientific community, not least from his son-in-law, Francesco Calogero. The scientists were particularly motivated to promote the NPT as they observed their government taking an increasingly oppositional stance. In a collection of materials published in 1967, editors Luisa La Malfa and Ennio Ceccarini bemoaned the fact that Italy had moved from a position strongly in favor of nuclear arms control (having advocated a nuclear moratorium in 1965) to one of the leaders, along with West Germany, "of the countries hostile to the treaty" on nonproliferation. 23

The Italian government's misgivings about the NPT stemmed from the failure of the Multilateral Force to give the country a finger on the nuclear trigger. The drafting of the Nonproliferation Treaty had left some Italian officials concerned that Italy would permanently lose its chance to join the "nuclear club." ²⁴ The governments of Italy and West Germany had urged the United States, in its negotiations with the USSR, to endorse a "clausola europea"—a European clause in the treaty that would permit a future unified Europe to deploy its own nuclear force. The treaty that the superpowers produced, however—as Article 1 makes clear—was quite explicit in ruling out the kind of "nuclear sharing" that characterized the Italian officials' vision for Italy's nuclear role in a future European political entity, or, some argued, even within NATO:

Each nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any non-nuclear weapon State to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or control over such weapons or explosive devices.

Italy, Germany, and several other countries were also concerned about whether the safeguards outlined in Article 3 would conflict with those already undertaken by the European Atomic Energy Community. Despite its misgivings, the Italian government sought and received parliamentary approval for its endorsement of the NPT in July 1968, just as the treaty was opened for signature, but before Italy had actually signed. Yet,

reluctance on the part of some politicians and officials to foreswear nuclear weapons was apparent at the time—even to outsiders. A formerly confidential document from the intelligence bureau of the US State Department described the "lamentations of the opponents of 'nuclear abstinence' in the Italian Foreign and Defense Ministries . . . a condition which is generally associated with permanent 'second class' status for both Italy and the Italians." ²⁵ The Italian government did eventually sign the treaty in January 1969 (it was opened for signature on 1 July 1968), but delayed ratification for several years.

Italian proponents of the treaty began to wonder whether their government's delay in ratifying indicated a renewed interest in obtaining nuclear weapons. Such concerns came to the fore when Achille Albonetti published an article in September 1974 describing what would be required for Italy to build its own nuclear weapon. Only at the end of a very detailed discussion of costs, types of delivery vehicles, amount of fissile material necessary, and so forth does he allow that "the only possible solution for Italy and the other European states will be the constitution of a European atomic force," associated with the US one and in the context of NATO.²⁶ He spent a great deal of effort to criticize the Nonproliferation Treaty as discriminatory against states that foreswear their own nuclear capabilities. Albonetti expressed surprise when Italian newspapers reacted to his article with headlines such as "L'atomica italiana," and he accused his critics of calumny. In a self-financed volume, published in 1976, Albonetti collected all of the relevant articles and documents-critical and supportive of his position-and sought to defend himself.²⁷

In the wake of Albonetti's Italian "bomb scare," Edoardo Amaldi, Francesco Calogero, Carlo Schaerf, and others took advantage of the opportunity to renew their campaign for Italy's ratification of the Nonproliferation Treaty. Calogero, in particular, responded to the NPT critics who feared a loss of prestige and a reduced international status for a nonnuclear Italy by turning that argument on its head. He had already proved adept at such political arguments in the initial round of debate over the NPT in 1967. To critics who claimed that by signing the NPT Italy would abandon the option pursued by de Gaulle to develop its own nuclear capability, Calogero posed the question: "What specific advantages derive, for example, from France's possession of nuclear arms? If the response is that it makes it a member of the exclusive nuclear club, that response is tautological, but certainly not convincing." Calogero went on to point out that if the argument is that the possession of nuclear arms makes France more independent from the United States than it would be otherwise (for better or worse), then one should consider the case of Switzerland—a non-nuclear state (yet capable of building nuclear weapons, if it wanted them) far more independent than France. 28

In the 1974 debate Calogero and his colleagues specifically addressed the issue of prestige and a "seat at the table" that had been so influential in determining Italy's nuclear policy. Calogero claimed that by delaying ratification of the treaty, Italy was shirking its responsibility to the other members of the EURATOM group and making a bad impression internationally ("una brutta figura internazionale").29 Calogero, along with his political and scientific allies, pointed out that by not ratifying, Italy was giving up a "seat at the table"-specifically, a seat at the NPT review conference scheduled to take place five years after the treaty entered into force. "A failure to participate fully in this conference would take away the opportunity for Italy to assert, in the most appropriate form, its international influence in order to enhance the effectiveness of the Treaty."30 The arguments in favor of ratification appear to have carried the day, as Italy formally ratified the NPT on 2 May 1975. Yet, one should not exclude the possibility that an equal or greater influence on the Italian decision came from US pressure. Given that the State Department as early as July 1968 anticipated that formal ratification by Italy would constitute "a mere formality," one would not be surprised if US officials were becoming impatient after nearly seven years of delay on a matter of key importance to US foreign policy. 31 Even in endorsing the treaty, Italy appended a number of reservations intended to justify NATO's continuing reliance on nuclear weapons, cooperation within EURATOM, and the possibility that a future European political entity might deploy its own nuclear force. 32 In effect, Italy's policy into the 1970s maintained a state of ambivalence. A more educated society and elite were becoming increasingly dubious about the merits of nuclear weapons, yet government officials still viewed the attachment to the weapons as a source of national prestige.

EUROMISSILES AND THE LAST STAND FOR NUCLEAR PRESTIGE

The supporters of Italy's adherence to the Nonproliferation Treaty argued, correctly, that their view represented the entire spectrum of political opinion in the country and the position of every political party with the exception of the ones on the extreme right. Yet, their argument that Italy should seek its international prestige as an advocate of disarmament rather than a member of the nuclear club had still not fully convinced the political elite. The Euromissile debate of the late 1970s and early 1980s pit the two contending views against each other in a context much changed from the earlier era of the Cold War. The main issue was concern that the strategic arms negotiations between the United States and Soviet Union had neglected the military balance in Europe. The Soviet Union was improving its capabilities in conventional forces (as was NATO) while deploying a new generation of intermediate-range ballistic missiles, dubbed

SS-20 in the West, to replace its obsolescent force of SS-4 and SS-5 missiles. Now understood mainly as a routine modernization and an attempt to accumulate "bargaining chips" for anticipated future negotiations to limit such systems, the SS-20 deployment caused considerable alarm in certain NATO circles. Officials claimed that Moscow was intent on splitting the European allies from the United States and that the SS-20 systems would serve as a means of political intimidation—although declassified evidence from Politburo discussions among Soviet leaders call this already dubious assertion into further question.³³ US and NATO leaders also revealed their own long-standing concerns about a US commitment to defend Europe in an age of superpower nuclear "parity." As the question was often posed at the time: "Would the United States risk sacrificing Washington to save Bonn?" On a more arcane level, nuclear strategists identified a "gap in the escalation spectrum" that, they argued, had to be filled by new European-based US nuclear weapons of a certain range. Deciding whether and where to deploy such weapons is where Italy came in.

During the 1970s, from the perspective of the government, Italy suffered a "relative loss of prestige" within NATO and its Nuclear Planning Group. As De Andreis explains, "Italy lost the Secretary General's post, the Deputy SACEUR post and the special status of permanent NPG member," when in November 1979 "all the thirteen countries interested in this body were invited to take part on a permanent basis."34 In the terms of this volume, Italy as an aspiring middle power could no longer distinguish itself from smaller powers such as Belgium and even Luxembourg, if they could all be permanent members of the NPG. West Germany's similar sensitivity to its status - having committed itself not to develop or deploy its own nuclear weapons as a condition for joining NATO in 1954—provided Italy an opportunity to enhance its own. The issue was Germany's insistence on "non-singularity," which Jane Sharp describes as the Germans' effort "to ensure that no changes to NATO defense or arms control policies will single out their forces or territory for singular treatment relative to other non-nuclear states in the alliance." 35 If a NATO decision had to involve another major non-nuclear state in Europe besides the Federal Republic, Italy would be the most likely candidate.

NATO's dual-track decision of December 1979 provided just such an opportunity for Italy. As Leopoldo Nuti describes it, in the wake of Italy's ratification of the Nonproliferation Treaty, the government's aspiration to play a major nuclear role in the alliance "had been placed on the back burner." But NATO's attention to the European missile balance, concern about the Soviet SS-20, and "the debate about a possible deployment of a new US delivery system offered the opportunity to reverse this trend and combine the renewed ambition to play a more dynamic foreign policy with the old habit of playing the nuclear gambit in order to strengthen the country's international standing." ³⁶

Italy's leaders had felt slighted by the decision of US President Jimmy Carter to convene a summit meeting in Guadeloupe in January 1979, to which he invited only the leaders of Britain, France, and Germany. As then British Prime Minister James Callaghan described it in a presentation before the House of Commons, much time was taken up at the meeting by questions of nuclear weapons and "whether the so-called grey areas should be included in any further negotiations." ³⁷ Italy's leaders had long chafed at the series of slights they believed their country had suffered during the 1970s. To hold discussions about such weighty nuclear matters without an Italian seat at the table was intolerable. As Nuti put it, "Guadeloupe was seen as the ultimate slap in the face for Italian foreign policy, and it confirmed Italy's growing international marginalization." ³⁸ In effect, the Guadeloupe summit reinforced the perception that Italy had lost its middle-power status.

Ultimately NATO adopted a "dual-track" approach to European security concerns, proposing negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces, but also new deployments of US cruise and Pershing II missiles. Germany, whose Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was widely credited with sounding the alarm bell about perceived imbalances in European conventional and nuclear forces, agreed to accept new missiles on its territory only if another major non-nuclear state in Europe would do so. Italy agreed to station cruise missiles on a base in Comiso, Sicily. ³⁹ By its willingness to deploy US missiles, Italy could assure, in the expectations of its status-conscious leaders, that there would be "no more Guade-loupes"—no more relegation to secondary status in NATO nuclear affairs. ⁴⁰

Thus, Italy's decision to deploy new US nuclear weapons fit the pattern of previous decisions regarding the Jupiter missiles and the many tactical nuclear systems deployed on Italian soil over the years. Military considerations played at best a secondary role to concerns about Italy's international standing and prestige. Yet, the context of the late 1970s and early 1980s was very different. The trajectory of General Nino Pasti's story serves as a reflection of the changes in Italian society and its attitudes towards nuclear weapons which had occurred over this time. Pasti, we recall, was the Italian general serving at NATO headquarters in 1958 who was dispatched by SACEUR Lauris Norstad to Rome to present the proposal for Italian deployment of the Jupiter missiles. His service as Deputy SACEUR for nuclear affairs represented a high point for those who linked Italy's international prestige to its role in NATO nuclear decisions. Yet, as much of Italian society became more sophisticated about the nuclear danger-and about what constitutes a genuine source of prestige-so did Pasti's views change. In 1976, having retired from military service, Pasti was elected a member of the Senate for an independent Left party antagonistic to the Italian Communist Party (PCI). Along with other former NATO generals, Pasti became an outspoken critic of NATO's

decision to deploy a new generation of Euromissiles.⁴¹ The generals' views were shared by a broad section of the public, including much of the center-left of the political spectrum, many Catholics, and the scientific community. The Euromissile controversy in Italy highlighted the extent to which decisions on nuclear weapons had shifted from a highly secretive domain, dominated by government officials from the center-right Christian-Democratic Party and its allies, to one that involved widespread public debate—in parliament and in the *piazza*.

The internal politics of the Euromissile controversy is a fascinating story in itself, as it highlighted the awkward position of the PCI and the changing fortunes of the other parties. The Christian-Democrats, no longer dominating the Italian government, nevertheless supported the deployment decision, although many Catholics held strong antinuclear sentiments and were active members of the peace movement. 42 The small Republican Party, so influential in promoting Italy's adherence to the Nonproliferation Treaty and supporting nuclear disarmament just a few years earlier, played a different role in the Euromissile debate. Giovanni Spadolini, the PRI leader, served as prime minister from June 1981 to December 1982, at the height of the debate. As the first postwar Italian prime minister not to herald from the Christian-Democratic Party, Spadolini was reluctant to stray too far from the norm of Atlanticist, pro-US foreign policy. Thus, he supported the Euromissile decision and Italy's agreement to deploy cruise missiles. The Communists faced a related dilemma. By seeking to play a balanced role suitably respectable for inclusion in a future government coalition, the PCI risked alienating the mass public who favored a more explicitly antinuclear program forthrightly opposing the cruise missiles. When the PCI did bring its mobilizing skills to bear, in helping to stage major demonstrations in Sicily and in Rome, it then fell into the trap that its opponents anticipated, as it opened itself to accusations of following the Soviet line of opposition to new NATO missiles.43

The Euromissile debate witnessed the continuing engagement of Italy's scientists in antinuclear activities, with Amaldi, Calogero, and Schaerf leading the way. In autumn 1981, the physicists sent an appeal to the President of the Republic signed by more than 800 scientists. ⁴⁴ Around the same time the Pontifical Academy at the Vatican issued a statement on the consequences of nuclear war, drafted by the scientists. ⁴⁵ In 1982, to supplement the more elite-level Italian Pugwash chapter, the scientists founded the Union of Scientists for Disarmament (Unione Scienziati per il Disarmo or USPID), although many of the leading figures, such as Carlo Schaerf and Francesco Calogero, were the same. ⁴⁶

As with the peace movement of the 1980s more generally, and the anti-missile campaigns in Europe, the Italian effort to prevent the deployment of cruise missiles resulted in an apparent failure: the missiles arrived at the Comiso base on schedule in the fall of 1983. Yet, the peace

movement had changed the climate of debate on nuclear weapons to the extent that when the reformist leader Mikhail Gorbachev came into power in the Soviet Union in 1985, he felt emboldened to make a number of significant concessions to reduce the nuclear danger. Politically, Gorbachev was drawn to the ideas of social democrats of Germany and Sweden, was a great admirer of Willy Brandt, Egon Bahr, and Olof Palme, and was close to the Italian communists and the ideology of Eurocommunism, in part from his trips to Italy, including as a tourist traveling by car with his wife Raisa. 47 Gorbachev also respected, and frequently met with, the scientists of the Pugwash movement and the physicians who led the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW)—one of whom was his personal physician, Evgenii Chazov. 48 When he and Ronald Reagan signed the 1987 treaty abolishing all intermediate and shorter-range nuclear missiles (INF Treaty)—SS-20, Pershing II, and land-based cruise missiles—Gorbachev acknowledged the role that the peace movements had played in supporting the goal of nuclear disarmament. He presented IPPNW co-president and US cardiologist Bernard Lown a copy of the 1987 INF treaty inscribed as follows: "Dear Bernard! I want to thank you for your enormous contribution in preventing nuclear war. Without it and other powerful antinuclear initiatives, it is unlikely that this treaty would have come about." 49 Among those antinuclear initiatives were the efforts of the Italian physicists and peacemovement activists, who contributed to a major reduction in the danger of nuclear war on the European continent by the end of the 1980s.

ITALIAN NUCLEAR ATTITUDES AFTER THE COLD WAR: FROM AMBIVALENT TO ALLERGIC

Although in the United States, the prevailing view of how the Cold War ended tends to favor the Reagan administration and its policy of "peace through strength," in Italy the legacy of antinuclear sentiments and the peace movement seems to have won the day. The name "Pugwash" produces blank stares among most Americans and perhaps among most Italians as well. But when the organization won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995, its Secretary-General Francesco Calogero garnered considerable attention, as he traveled to Oslo to accept the prize. Most Italians seemed sympathetic to the goals of the organization and willing to credit it with contributing to the end of the Cold War. ⁵⁰

The growing Italian allergy to nuclear weapons was probably reinforced by Italian concerns about the dangers of civilian nuclear energy. In the wake of the Chernobyl disaster of 1986, a nationwide referendum declared a moratorium on construction of nuclear power plants in Italy—a decision that the government of Silvio Berlusconi has sought to overturn, against considerable popular resistance. The Catholic Church's in-

creasingly pacifist orientation has strengthened the case of antinuclear Christians in Italy. The movement against expansion of the US military base at Vicenza, although not motivated primarily by concern about nuclear weapons, has, nonetheless, bolstered the position of those who favor the removal of the last remaining nuclear weapons from Italian soil.⁵¹ Of the estimated 180 US nuclear weapons remaining on European soil in 2010, half were deployed in Italy: fifty at the Aviano air base and forty at Gheddi Torre.⁵² In March 2008, some 67,248 Italian citizens endorsed a draft law to reject the storage of those weapons and declare the entire country a Nuclear-Free Zone.⁵³ Finally, the new attention to global nuclear disarmament as a goal embraced by prominent former policy-makers in the United States (George Shultz, William Perry, Sam Nunn, and Henry Kissinger), as well as the administration of Barack Obama, provided additional support to Italian antinuclear sentiments.⁵⁴ Italians offered their own version of a "Gang of Four" statement in favor of global nuclear abolition in July 2008. In this case, however, unlike with previous US and German statements, the Italians were not government officials long since retired. Instead, they included recently or currently serving politicians representing the entire Italian political spectrum-Massimo D'Alema, former prime minister and foreign minister; Arturo Parisi, former defense minister; Gianfranco Fini, then current foreign minister; and Giorgio La Malfa, member of parliament and head of the Italian Republican Party-plus the ubiquitous Francesco Calogero, who undoubtedly drafted the statement.55 If such efforts succeed, the promotion of nuclear disarmament could become a source of status for Italy as a middle power-much as Italy has sought to bolster its status in the international realm with campaigns against the death penalty, against torture, and in favor of human rights.

In the decades since the physicists, building on the pioneering work of Enrico Fermi, created weapons of unprecedented destructive power and used them against two Japanese cities, Italian attitudes towards nuclear arms have witnessed a slow but steady transformation. In the early years of the Cold War, Italian popular opinion about nuclear weapons reflected a certain ambivalence born of preoccupation with many other pressing concerns, such as economic survival. Aside from the sizeable Communist electorate, always hostile to the militarization of foreign policy promoted by the United States and Italy's other allies in the NATO, most Italians were willing to cede the nuclear sphere to their political leaders. These leaders, not particularly knowledgeable about nuclear technology, viewed nuclear weapons as a source of international prestige and sought to maintain Italy's status within the NATO alliance by welcoming the deployment of US nuclear weapons on Italian soil. Some Italian officials' commitment to nuclear weapons as instruments of prestige was so great that they were reluctant to endorse the widespread support for Italy's non-nuclear status as a signatory of the Nonproliferation Treaty.⁵⁶ That

ambivalence about Italy's approach to nuclear weapons helped mobilize Italy's nuclear physicists to lobby for a more forthright Italian approach to the nuclear arms race. They were joined in the 1970s and 1980s by a popular movement alarmed by the worsening state of East-West relations and the acceleration of the arms race represented by the Euromissile crisis. The peaceful resolution of that crisis, in the form of the INF Treaty, helped achieve a key goal of the European Nuclear Disarmament movement, in which Italian activists participated.

The end of the Cold War reinforced the pacifistic and antinuclear sentiments of the Italian populace and helped turn ambivalence about nuclear weapons into outright opposition. An idea that seemed plausible in the 1950s and 1960s—that Italy's international standing would be enhanced by its involvement in strategies for nuclear war—seemed increasingly dubious to anyone who was not a government official in the 1970s and 1980s, and within a couple more decades even to them. The shift from nuclear ambivalence to nuclear allergy coincided with, and was to some extent a result of, a trend away from secrecy and centralization of nuclear policy towards growing popular awareness and involvement. The influence of domestic politics and the assertiveness of junior partners in government coalitions so characteristic of Italian foreign policy after the Cold War was evident much earlier in the nuclear domain, as Italy's rulers sought to enhance the perception of their country as an important middle power.

NOTES

1. My understanding of Italian nuclear policy has benefitted a great deal from conversations with Nadezhda Arbatova, Francesco Calogero, Marco de Andreis, Mirco Elena, Giorgio La Malfa, Luisa La Malfa, and Carlo Schaerf, none of whom bears responsibility for whatever errors my analysis contains. I particularly thank Leopoldo Nuti and Alessandro Pascolini, who read a previous draft and kindly saved me from some embarrassing errors.

2. For more detail, see the excellent study by Lodovica Clavarin, Scienza e Politica nell'Era Nucleare: La Scelta Pacifista di Edoarda Amaldi, Tesi di Laurea Magistrale, Facoltà

di Scienze Politiche, Università degli Studi "Roma Tre," 2008.

3. Giulio Douhet, Command of the Air (Il Dominio dell'Aria, 1921) translated by Dino

Ferrari (New York: Coward-McCann, 1942).

4. On the development of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons and their deployment to Europe, see Matthew Evangelista, Innovation and the Arms Race: How the United States and the Soviet Union Develop New Military Technologies (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), chapter 3.

5. Leopoldo Nuti, La Sfida Nucleare: La Politica Estera Italiana e le Armi Atomiche 1945–1991 (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2007), 83–84. I am grateful to Professor Nuti for clarify-

ing some of these issues in correspondence of March 15, 2010.

6. Letter from Enrico Persico to Bruno Rossi, December 24, 1946, quoted in Clavarino, Scienza e Politica nell'Era Nucleare, 97–98.

7. Marco De Andreis, "The Nuclear Debate in Italy," Survival 28, no. 3 (1986): 195–207, at 196–7.

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- 8. De Andreis, "The Nuclear Debate in Italy," 195-6.
- 9. Pietro Quaroni, "L'Italie e la Demande de l'Angleterre," La Revue des Deux Mondes (July 1971), reprinted in Achille Albonetti, L'Italia e l'Atomica: Il Governo, il Parlamento, i Partiti, i Diplomatici, gli Scienziati e la Stampa (Faenza: Fratelli Lega Editori, 1976), 131–3; Enrico Mannucci, "Quando l' Italia Voleva l'ATOMICA," Corriere della Sera, April 4, 2002.
- 10. Nuti, La Sfida Nucleare, 124, 131.
- 11. Nuti, La Sfida Nucleare, 175, 197.
- 12. De Andreis, "The Nuclear Debate in Italy," 196. I am grateful to Leopoldo Nuti for providing additional details.
- 13. Jim Hershberg, "Anatoly F. Dobrynin's Meeting with Robert F. Kennedy, Saturday, 27 October 1962," in "Anatomy of a Controversy," *The Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Issue 5 (1995), available from http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba mis cri/moment.htm (accessed June 28, 2011).
- 14. Nuti, La Sfida Nucleare, 247–62; Leopoldo Nuti, "The United States, Italy, and the Opening to the Left, 1953–1963," Journal of Cold War Studies 4, no. 3 (2002): 36–55. Leopoldo Nuti, I missili di Ottobre: La Storiografia Americana e la Crisi Cubana dell'Ottobre 1962 (Milan: LED, 1994).
- 15. De Andreis, "The Nuclear Debate in Italy," 197.
- 16. Roberto Guidi (Roberto Gaja), Le Conseguenze Politiche della Bomba Atomica (Florence: Poligrafico Toscano, 1959); and Roberto Guidi (Roberto Gaja), Politica Estera ed Armi Nucleari (Bologna: Cappelli, 1964); for a discussion of his influence, see his obituary: "La Scomparsa di Gaja Maestro di Diplomazia," Corriere della Sera, June 8, 1992.
- 17. See, for example, Achille Albonetti, L'Europa e la Questione Nucleare (Bologna: Capelli, 1964).
- 18. Clavarin, Scienza e Politica nell'Era Nucleare, 138.
- 19. Carlo Schaerf, "The International Summer School on Disarmament and Arms Control" (paper presented at the 18th Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs, Nice (France), September 1968), cited in Clavarino, Scienza e Politica nell'Era Nucleare, 144, n. 257.
- 20. Edoardo Amaldi, "Dichiarazione sul Problema della Proliferazione delle Armi Nucleari," Rome, May 22, 1965, cited in Clavarino, Scienza e Politica nell'Era Nucleare, 142.
- 21. Luisa Calogero La Malía and Ennio Ceccarini, eds., Contro la Proliferazione delle Armi Nucleare: Libro Bianco (Rome: Edizioni della Voce, 1967), 223.
- 22. "Lettera dei Docenti di Fisica a Fanfani," March 5, 1967, in Contro la Proliferazione delle Armi Nucleare, ed. La Malfa and Ceccarini, 241–45.
- 23. La Malfa and Ceccarini, eds., Contro la Proliferazione delle Armi Nucleare, 6.
- 24. On the history of Italian officials' interest in deploying U.S. nuclear weapons on Italian soil as a way to join the club, see Leopoldo Nuti, "Me Too, Please': Italy and the Politics of Nuclear Weapons, 1945–1975," *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 4, no. 1 (1993): 114–48.
- 25. U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Intelligence Note-605, "Italian Parliament Gives Overwhelming Backing to NPT," July 31, 1968, "Confidential/No Foreign Dissem/Controlled Dissem," available from www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb253/doc31.pdf (accessed June 28, 2011).
- 26. Achille Albonetti, "Difesa Nazionale e Autonomia Nucleare," *Politica e Strategia* (1974), reprinted in Achille Albonetti, *L'Italia e l'Atomica*, 152–66, quotation at 161.
- 27. Albonetti, L'Italia e l'Atomica.
- 28. Francesco Calogero, comments at a roundtable of the Institute of International Affairs, March 5, 1967, quoted in La Malfa and Ceccarini, eds., Contro la Proliferazione delle Armi Nucleare, 229.
- 29. Sergio Segre, "Insensate Velleità per la Bomba Italiana," *Rinascita*, December 27, 1974, reprinted in Albonetti, *L'Italia e l'Atomica*, 89.

- 30. 30 Statement by members of the PRI (including Ugo La Malfa and Giorgio La Malfa) in the Chamber of Deputies, July 29, 1974, reprinted in Albonetti, L'Italia e l'Atomica, 103. Similar arguments are made by Amaldi and Calogero interviewed in L'Europeo, October 17, 1974 (reprinted in Albonetti, L'Italia e l'Atomica, 173–6) and in an open letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs by 142 physicists (an initiative of Amaldi, Calogero, and Schaerf), September 26, 1974 (reprinted in Albonetti, L'Italia e l'Atomica, 177–81).
 - 31. "Italian Parliament Gives Overwhelming Backing to NPT," 1.
- 32. For the text of the Italian statements, see http://disarmament.un.org/ TreatyStatus.nsf/952a13b8945f4b07852568770078d9c2/ 6f2775feb4c1e7e18525688f006d2664?OpenDocument (accessed on June 28, 2011).
- 33. Particularly useful is the transcript of a Politburo meeting of May 31, 1983, located in F. 89, op. 42, d. 53, Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Noveishei Istorii), the former Central Committee archive, Moscow. For a review of the arguments of the time, and the nature of the evidence that has emerged since, see Matthew Evangelista, "Factual and Counterfactual Questions about the Euromissile Controversy" (paper presented at the conference "The Euromissiles Crisis and the End of the Cold War, 1977–1987," Rome, December 10–12, 2009).
- 34. De Andreis, "The Nuclear Debate in Italy," 198.
- 35. Jane M.O. Sharp, "Nuclear Weapons and Alliance Cohesion," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (June/July 1982), 34.
- 36. Leopoldo Nuti, "The Nuclear Debate in Italian Politics in the Late 1970s and the Early 1980s" (paper presented at the conference on "The Euromissiles Crisis and the End of the Cold War, 1977–1987," Rome, December 10–12, 2009).
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- 41. Nino Pasti, Euromissiles and the Balance of Forces: Propaganda and Reality (Helsinki: Information Centre of the World Peace Council, 1983). See, also, Antoine Sanguinetti, Le Devoir de Parler (Paris: Nathan, 1981).
- 42. On the debate among Italian Catholics, see Giovanni Mario Ceci, "The Italian Catholic World and the Christian Democratic Party Facing the Dilemma of the Euromissiles, 1979–1983" (paper presented at a conference on "Peace Movements in the Cold War and Beyond," London School of Economics, United Kingdom, February 1–2, 2008). On the broader peace movement, including the scientists, see Lawrence S. Wittner, Toward Nuclear Abolition: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1971 to the Present, volume 3 of The Struggle Against the Bomb (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).
- 43. For an authoritative account of the internal politics, see Nuti, "The Nuclear Debate in Italian Politics"; see also Wittner, Toward Nuclear Abolition.
- 44. "Appello dei Fisici Italiani," November 27, 1981, Archivio Amaldi, Dipartimento di Fisica dell'Università di Roma, "La Sapienza." Contributed by Lodovica Clavarino to the Conference Reader (collection of documents) for the conference on "The Euromissiles Crisis and the End of the Cold War, 1977–1987," Rome, December 10–12, 2009 [hereafter, the Euromissiles Conference Reader].
- 45. "Statement of the Consequences of the Use of Nuclear Weapons," October 8, 1981, formulated at the conclusion of a meeting of the Pontificia Academia Scientiarum, Vatican City, Archivio Amaldi, Dipartimento di Fisica dell'Università di Roma, "La Sapienza." Contributed by Lodovica Clavarino to the Euromissiles Conference Reader.
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in the book and also in the Euromissiles Conference Reader.

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56. That is not to say that everyone was happy with the Nonproliferation Treaty itself. Even its supporters recognized the unequal nature of the arrangement that separated the nuclear haves from the have-nots. They recognized—presciently, as it turned out—that the have-nots, in signing the Treaty, gave up most of their leverage on the haves to carry out their commitment to eventual nuclear disarmament.

Italy's Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century

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