

# Refractory Migrants. Fascist Surveillance on Italians in Australia 1922-1943

*by Gianfranco Cresciani*

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*There are exiles that gnaw and others  
that are like consuming fire.  
There is a heartache for the murdered  
country...*

- Pablo Neruda

*We can never forget  
what happened to our country  
and we must always remind those responsible  
that we know who they are.*

- Elizabeth Rivera

One of the more salient and frightening aspects of European dictatorships during the Twentieth Century, in their effort to achieve totalitarian control of

their societies, was the grassroots surveillance carried out by their state security organisations, of the plots and machinations of their opponents. Nobody described better this process of capillary penetration in the minds and conditioning of the lives of people living under Communist or Fascist regimes than George Orwell in his book *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1), published in 1949 and warning us on the danger of Newspeak, Doublethink, Big Brother and the Thought Police. However, the process of mass surveillance of refractory subjects preceded the rise of totalitarianism. The Ochrana in Tsarist Russia and the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* (Directorate-General of Public Safety) in Liberal Italy, to give just two examples, had already begun this screening practice at the end of the Nineteenth Century (2). However, it was in the Twentieth Century that the obsession for pervasive, absolute control reached new heights. For instance, when in July 2003 the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) returned to the Federal Republic of Germany the so-called Rosenwood files, the archives of the *Stasi*, the Secret Police of the defunct German Democratic Republic, that the CIA had obtained in 1992 from a Russian KGB officer who had worked in East Berlin, it was discovered that the *Stasi* employed more than 200,000 secret agents and that over 2.4 million East Germans were placed under *Stasi* observation during Communist rule (3).

Fascist Italy, between 1922 and 1945, also set up a system of espionage over its enemies. In January 1924, Mussolini ordered the establishment of a Fascist secret police, led by one of his trusted thugs and Chief of his Press Office, Cesare Rossi, proposing to call it CEKA, "as the Soviet CEKA, it sounds good". It is reported that in June 1924 the future Duce, deeply irritated by the staunch parliamentary opposition by Giacomo Matteotti, asked what was the Fascist CEKA doing to silence the Socialist leader (4), who afterwards was kidnapped and murdered. In 1927, following the disbanding of CEKA, the Regime created OVRA, a menacing acronym, yet again coined by Mussolini himself, that was deemed to mean *Opera Volontaria di Repressione dell'Antifascismo* (Voluntary Organisation for the Repression of Anti-Fascism). It was loosely modelled on the Soviet internal security agency, the Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter-Revolutionaries and Saboteurs (CEKA), that in February 1922 changed its name to the Government Political Administration (GPU), to become after 1934 the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD). Also in 1927, the Italian Ministry of the Interior had its old security arm, the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza*, restructured into seven Divisions (General and Confidential Affairs, Political Police, Personnel, Armed Forces, Police, Contracts and Supply, Border and Transport Police). OVRA was directly responsible to the Chief of the Division of Political Police (*Divisione Polizia Politica*) who, in turn, reported to the crafty and cunning Chief of Police, Arturo Bocchini. Until his death in 1940, Bocchini briefed Mussolini daily on the plans, or otherwise, of the anti-Fascists. In 1933, OVRA established a network of eleven Zones. Staff maintained surveillance activities, both at home and abroad, through a network of 380 informers, some of whom managed their own pool of sub-informers. The other Divisions also had their independent network of

informers, adding to the amount of intelligence gathered on Italian communities abroad.

The *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* had established in 1894 a *Casellario Politico Centrale* (Central Political Repository) that began maintaining files on the categories of "Anarchists", "Anarco-Socialists", "Socialists" and "Republicans". This system required an endless series of checks of 'subversives', real or imaginary. The files had to be constantly updated by the gathering of information, either discreetly or, when the subject was considered particularly dangerous, with overt, intimidating vigilance. Fascism added "Communists" and "Anti-Fascists" to the categories, and exponentially increased the number of people under its surveillance. By the end of 1927, the *Casellario Politico Centrale* comprised 130,000 files, an increase of 100,000 (5) over the number kept by the governments of Liberal Italy, to peak at a total of 158,000, contained in 5,570 *buste* (boxes) by the end of the Regime. The biographical notes included the dissident's education, profession, physical and alleged psychological characteristics, moods (whether he was excitable, irritable, easily led, etc.), and the 'moral tendencies', ranging from laziness to sexual tendencies (6).

Following the collapse of Fascism in 1945 and the defeat of the Monarchy in 1946, the Governments of Republican Italy continued to operate the system, albeit adapting it to the new political situation created by the Cold War. The *Casellario Politico Centrale* was restructured by General of the *Carabinieri* Giuseppe Pièche, a former OVRA collaborator who had led secret Fascist missions during the Spanish Civil War and after 1945 aided and abetted the formation of neo-Fascist groups (7). In February 1946 the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* established the *Servizio Informazioni Speciali* (Special Information Service, in short SIS), under the command of Leone Santoro, who in 1936-37 had been OVRA's Inspector-General in charge of training the Police of Portuguese Clerical-Fascist dictator Antonio de Oliveira Salazar in the techniques of screening dissidents and repressing political opposition (8). One of SIS's main tasks was that of maintaining the *Casellario Politico Centrale*.

In 1948 SIS was replaced by the *Divisione Affari Riservati* (Division of Confidential Affairs), still under the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza*, but now directly responsible to the Chief of Police. Its Head was Gesualdo Barletta, at that time Deputy-Commissioner of Police and former OVRA *Questore* (Inspector-General) in charge of the Rome region, who soon gathered around him other former colleagues and informers. Barletta remained in charge of the *Divisione Affari Riservati* until 1956. He was succeeded by Giuseppe Lutri, who, during the dictatorship, had been in charge of Turin's Political Police and in March 1934, with unmistakable anti-Semitic zest, rounded up Jewish supporters of Giustizia e Libertà. On 30 June 1960, as *Questore* of Genoa, Lutri authorised the police charge against the participants to a rally in protest of Christian-Democrat leader Fernando Tambroni's attempt to form a government in coalition with the neo-Fascist Movimento Sociale Italiano, an attack which wounded 83. Lutri led the

*Divisione Affari Riservati* until 1969. Two other glaring instances of chameleon-like political transformism were those of Saverio Polito and Guido Leto. Polito, who in the 'Thirties had been Chief of the 4<sup>th</sup> OVRA Zone (Umbria, Abruzzi, Molise), achieved notoriety when he received a 24 years jail sentence for "acts of aggravated indecency" (*per atti di libidine violenta*), for having forced Mussolini's wife, Rachele, to put her hand on his genitals (*tra le sue luride vergogne*, as Donna Rachele's charge read), while he was escorting her to Rocca delle Carminate in August 1943. Appointed *Questore* of Rome in the late 'Forties, Polito was compelled to retire in 1954 after his clumsy attempt to derail the inquest on the death of Wilma Montesi, a case that exposed internecine struggles within the Christian Democratic leadership. Guido Leto, who since 1926 had been a close associate of Bocchini, in October 1938 became the Chief of the *Divisione Polizia Politica* and kept his position under the infamous Repubblica Sociale Italiana, until 26 April 1945, when he offered his collaboration to the partisans and to the Allied Counter Intelligence Corps. In 1948 he was readmitted to the ranks and appointed Technical Director of the Police Academy. Leto retired in 1951, to be engaged by the Marzotto family as Director of the Jolly Hotels chain (9).

It would be expected that, after the liberation of Italy from Fascism, the records of the Regime's iniquities would be made public. This was not and – sadly – still is not the case. Many of the six thousand personal files of OVRA's and other agencies' agents, double-agents, informers, collaborators and spies were destroyed, some by Leto during his administration. Other incriminating records, in particular the personal file on Hitler and those on Nazi espionage in Italy, were confiscated by Herbert Kappler, the so-called 'butcher of the Ardeatine Caves'. The residue was deposited only in 1969 at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato (State Central Archives) in Rome, which currently lists only 21 *buste* on OVRA for scholarly consultation, as well as 2,064 *buste* of the archives of the *Divisione Polizia Politica*. The record of the 380 Zone informers on OVRA's payroll, as well as the papers of the High Commission for Sanctions against Fascism, totalling 431 *buste* and 11 registers containing documentation on the trials of people highly compromised with the Regime, are still closed to researchers. Also, part of the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* papers is still unexplainably kept by the Ministry of the Interior. As well, the original list of informers on the payroll of the Division of Political Police is still considered top secret, although we know that the 622 names released on 2 July 1946 in the *Gazzetta Ufficiale* represent only a minority of the '*spie del Regime*'(10). It is difficult to understand the reason for this secrecy in the post-Cold War era as, for instance, it is hard to accept the restrictions imposed on access to the 1,200 files on indicted and – unlike the German and the Japanese ones – never tried Italian war criminals, files compiled by the United Nations War Crimes Commission after the Second World War and now kept in the archives of the United Nations Organisation (11).

Incredibly, under the governments of democratic, Republican Italy, the *Casellario Politico Centrale* was still maintained, and by 1961 contained

13,716 new files. Its use as an instrument for screening dissent would be reluctantly terminated only in the following years. Indeed, it is almost beyond belief that, as late as 22 September 1962, the *Questura* of Bologna was communicating to the Ministry of the Interior that, "considering his old age, this Office has determined to cancel today from the list of subversives (*lo ha radiato da questo schedario politico*)" Ignazio Spinelli, a Communist who since 1936 had been politically inactive and was then 68 years of age. Of these files, 12,491, or 91 per cent, were on people classified as left-wing extremists, 177 as Anarchists and only 626, or 4.5 per cent, as right-wing extremists (12). An indication this, of the continuity of the bias against the Left by the State Security apparatus, be it in Liberal, Fascist or Republican Italy. As well as in the files of OVRA and of the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza*, a wealth of information on the opposition to Fascism is available in the 12,330 files maintained on the *confinati*, the people who for different reasons were sent to *confino*, to isolation in God-forgotten villages of Southern Italy. This was the case for Carlo Levi, the author of *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, an account of his two-year detention in the Lucanian village of Aliano (13).

As mentioned before, the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* carried out surveillance on the opposition to Fascism also among Italian migrant communities abroad, including in Australia. The Consulate-General in Melbourne, transferred to Sydney in 1928, the Consulates, Branches of the Fascist Party, the *Dopolavoro* (After Work clubs), the Italian Returned Soldiers Association, the Dante Alighieri Society, the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Australia, were all institutions that aided and abetted the gathering of information on the whereabouts and the activities of Italian migrants who, for one reason or another, had been in trouble with Fascism in Italy or who had fallen foul of the Fascist representatives in Australia. They were assisted in their intelligence work by a network of Italian *confidenti*, informers and *agent provocateurs*. In addition, the *Direzione Polizia Politica* had placed at the main Italian border posts special agents who would tail migrants, especially if Communist, when they came back to Italy, to uncover possible contacts with members of the underground opposition, that often resulted in the arrest of the entire network of conspirators.

The *Casellario Politico Centrale* at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato contains records on 233 Italian migrants in Australia. It has been ascertained that files were kept on other migrants in Australia, but they have been misplaced, transferred to other agencies or simply missed in the search carried out in 1989 for the Author by staff of the Archives. Of the people signalled as worthy of police attention, 230 were men, and only three women, two from the Veneto and one from Friuli. The first observation that can be made is the relatively high number of people who, in far-away Australia, were still a concern to the Fascist authorities. According to Australian Census data for 1933, at that time there were in Australia 20,064 Italian males and 6,692 females (14). If one considers the scattering of migrants in remote rural areas of the vast Australian continent, the monitoring of over 1 per cent of them on the part of the Fascist authorities betrayed the Regime's deep sense

of insecurity, as well as its doggedness in pursuit of those it named as enemies. The opening of a file on these migrants was motivated by their real or alleged political persuasion and by the perceived level of threat that they represented to Italian interests in Australia or in case they would return to Italy. Of the 233, the greatest number were Communist (77), while 57 were Socialist, 31 Anarchist and 11 Republican. Another 56 were vaguely called 'anti-Fascists' and one was labelled a 'subversive' (15). The overwhelming majority (178) came from Northern Italy, while only 21 were born in Central Italy and 31 from the South. Of the Northern Italian component, almost half (83) originated in the Veneto. The birthplace of three people was not available (16). An analysis of their occupation is also indicative, because no less than 54 different trades and professions were declared. Most – as is to be expected – were working class occupations, dominated by farm workers of one kind or another (90) and followed by a good representation of tradespeople. People who could vaguely be classed as middle class or intellectuals totalled 16, while one person was entered in the file as *possidente* (property owner) (17).

Beside surveillance, the means used by the Fascist authorities to intimidate, control, repress or cajole into submission and collaboration refractory migrants varied considerably. The files of the *Casellario Politico Centrale* contain ample evidence of these methods. Sometimes the migrant was invited to come to the Consulate, where the Consul or his staff gave him a dressing down for his politically unacceptable behaviour. His parents, family or relatives in Italy were then visited by members of the Fascist paramilitary organisation, the *Milizia Volontaria per la Sicurezza Nazionale* (Voluntary Militia for National Security) or by the *Carabinieri*, who confiscated letters, photos or other compromising literature sent by the 'subversive' to his next-of-kin. This material then ended in the files of the *Casellario Politico Centrale*. On other occasions the correspondence of those anti-Fascists was intercepted and seized. This operation was facilitated by the fact that the Australian postal service relied on Italian consular authorities to trace the address of often itinerant Italian workers. Also, the Consulates availed themselves of the services of the Australian Police who obligingly located people who had escaped the Fascist dragnet. The Fascist Consuls lobbied Australian employers to dismiss prominent anti-Fascists, as was the case for Omero Schiassi in Melbourne in the 'Twenties, or denounced them to the Australian authorities as dangerous Anarchists or Communists, as was the case for Francesco Carmagnola, and requested that they be deported to Italy. There is also circumstantial evidence of an attempt to kidnap Omero Schiassi by some Italian sailors and return him to Italy. When the Italian cruiser *Raimondo Montecuccoli* berthed in Melbourne in 1938, an Italian distributing anti-Fascist literature was forcibly detained on board for some time by the sailors, provoking a diplomatic incident between the two countries. Italian migrants who were deemed particularly active or dangerous were registered in the *Bollettino delle Ricerche* (Search Bulletin), distributed to all law enforcement agencies with instructions to look for them and signal their whereabouts, as well as in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* (Border Register), with instructions to the police to search, either report their movements or detain

them immediately in case they tried to re-enter Italy. In extreme circumstances, diehard opponents had their Italian citizenship revoked and their property confiscated by the authorities under special law no. 108, promulgated on 31 January 1926 (18).



*The Italian cruiser Raimondo Montecuccoli during its controversial visit to Melbourne in 1938.*

The specific circumstances that brought people in Australia to the attention of the Fascist authorities varied. In most cases a file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* had already been opened on them before their departure from Italy by reason of their previous dissident activities. Otherwise their names were sent by the Fascist Consuls to the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* in Rome for inclusion in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*, in response to allegations of their proselytising amongst migrants. While, during the 'Thirties, the suppression of Communism was foremost in the minds of the representatives of Fascism in Australia, in the 'Twenties the spectre of Anarchism concerned them most. An indication of the burgeoning Anarchism among Italian migrants is given by the number of Anarchist papers that appeared in those years, despite protestations by the Consul-General to the Australian authorities. In July 1927, Valentino Ciotti, a member of the

Anarchist Matteotti Club in Melbourne, edited *Il Risveglio* (The Awakening), but the paper was suppressed by the Attorney-General after the third issue, following strong representations made by an irate Consul-General, Antonio Grossardi (19).



*Members of the Matteotti Club and anti-Fascists. Melbourne, May Day 1928. Included are Isidoro Bertazzon (far left, second row from right) and Francesco Carmagnola (far right, standing at front).*

Between 1928 and 1932, Isidoro Bertazzon, also a member of the Matteotti Club, edited an impressive number of single issue newspapers, changing their name at every issue, in order to circumvent the censure of the Australian authorities. Thus, in August 1928 appeared *Il Calvario* (The Calvary), followed by *L'azione* (Action, September 1928), *Giacomo Matteotti* (10 June 1929), *Germinal* (July 1929), *In memoria* (August 1929), *Il Risveglio* (October 1929), followed by the multi-issue *L'Avanguardia Libertaria* (The Libertarian Vanguard, 14 June 1930-15 November 1932), granted permission to publish by the new Scullin Labor Government (20). In Ingham, North Queensland, charismatic leader Francesco Giuseppe Carmagnola published another Anarchist sheet, *La Riscossa* (The Counter-Attack, June 1929-December 1931) (21).



Sometimes, larrikinism and innocent romping ended in attracting harsh Fascist penalties. This was the case for Pietro Acquasaliente, a peasant from Schio (Vicenza), who, in February 1926, together with seven very inebriated (*alquanto avvinazzati*) friends, broke in the primary school of his *paese*, defaced the portraits of Mussolini and the King and drew on the blackboard the hammer and sickle, accompanied by slogans praising Lenin. For this irresponsible prank he was sentenced to 3 months and 14 days jail and fined 416 lire. Soon after he emigrated to Mareeba, Queensland, where he began growing tobacco, and was put under surveillance by the Innisfail *Fascio* (Fascist Branch). Registered in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* for offences against the Duce, his name was not formally deleted from the *Rubrica*, "on account of his behaviour abroad", until 1939. Another migrant, Cirillo Hojak from Gorizia, was, as Bocchini put it, on 14 March 1928, in a cablegram to the Melbourne Consul, "suspected of professing Communist ideas that he made his own in Russia, where he was a prisoner during the war". This suspicion was confirmed in November 1927 when Hojak, before emigrating to Australia, visibly drunk in an *osteria* (wine bar) in Gorizia, began singing 'subversive' songs and lampooning Mussolini. For this deed, he was sentenced to one year and ten days jail term and a fine of one thousand lire. Because this was his only crime, his name was also later deleted from the list of subversives. The stigma of bearing a Slav-sounding name did not help Antonio Percich either. Before emigrating in 1927 from Fiume to Bendigo, to prospect for gold, Percich earned the insertion of his name in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* because, as the Prefect of Pola stated to the Ministry of the Interior, "he has shown overt Slav feelings...sympathising with the Slav cause, and although he was not politically active, he was considered a person hostile to our institutions" (23).



*Italian migrants at work on a tobacco plantation. Mareeba, c.1933.*

Frequently, migrants first ran foul of the Consuls for some infringement of the criminal law (*Codice di Procedura Penale*). Leonardo Altomare jumped ship in Philadelphia (USA) in 1923, was sentenced to 6 months jail and a 120 lire fine for mercantile desertion and registered in the *Rubrica di Frontiera*, initially with instructions to arrest him, later to search and watch. His file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* contains reports by the Consul-General in New York, detailing his activities as an agitator and contributor of funds to anti-Fascist organisations in Paris. In 1931, having been informed of Altomare's intention to emigrate to Australia, the Consul-General in Sydney asked his counterpart in New York to refuse him a passport, but Altomare was by then an American citizen. He settled in Port Pirie, South Australia, where, in May 1939, he was reported by a Fascist spy for being employed in the fishing industry, receiving anti-Fascist literature from the USA and "until recently, writing subversive articles that he was nailing to the poles of the wharves where our fishermen were berthing". The *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* was still interested in him in January 1942 (24). Another migrant who automatically earned his place in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* was the Anarchist Carlo Bonfanti. Employed as a waiter in Folkestone during the First World War, Bonfanti in August 1916 was deported on the MV *Sturmfels* from the United Kingdom to Naples, following his conviction to three months' jail under Article 12 of the Aliens Restriction (Consolidation) Order 1916, for contravening Article 27 of the Defence of the Realm Regulation. He had been found guilty of writing articles against compulsory military service in the *Voice of Labour*. Despite Bonfanti's past, Consul-General Grossardi on 12 August 1926 was able to report that the conduct of Bonfanti, who after the war had emigrated to Sydney and was then living in Paddington (NSW), was good (25).

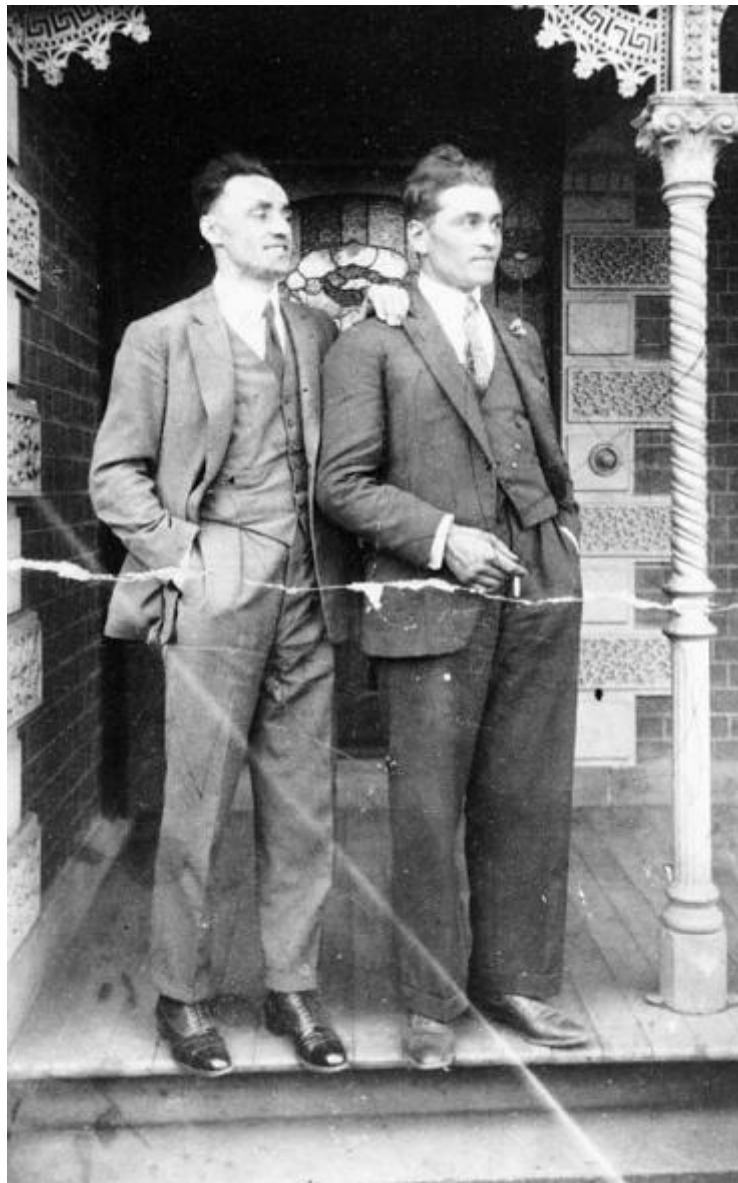
Information gathered by the vast network of informers reporting to Fascist diplomats was painstakingly analysed, cross-referenced and recorded in the files of the *Casellario Politico Centrale*. Consular reports were often indirectly referring to the involvement of Fascist spies as *persona favorevolmente nota* (a well-regarded person), or *da fonte attendibile* (from a reliable source), or *è stato fiduciarmente segnalato* (it has confidentially been brought to our attention), or *dalle indagini esperite* (from enquiries made). Spies and informers, called by the representatives of Fascism, with a term that can only be defined as deeply ironical, *fiduciari* (trustworthy people), were to be found not only among Italian migrants, but also among Australian sympathisers, including some in the police. Sydney's Consul, Mario Carosi, in February 1928 reported to Rome that "I have spoken about Giovanni Terribile Antico [a known Anarchist] and his brother Giuseppe to Major Lloyd of the Investigation Branch and he assured me that he will gather the most detailed information by means of his special agents and will communicate it to me". Already in November 1926 Consul-General Grossardi relayed to the Italian Ministry of the Interior that his office was keeping Giovanni Terribile Antico under surveillance (*non manca di sorvegliarlo*) (26). The assistance afforded by Major Lloyd was not an isolated incident. Some members of Australian law enforcement agencies considered anti-Fascist Italians to be enemies of the

established order as well as an inferior breed, to the point that many migrants, after having long suffered Fascist persecution, during World War II were interned together with their Fascist persecutors. When, in December 1942, an appeal was lodged to release from internment fifty Queensland anti-Fascists, the Deputy-Director of Security for Queensland objected to free one of them, Manlio Signorini, on the vaguest of grounds, because "Signorini's background is such that he is more Italian than British" (27).

Sometime the *fiduciari* did not stick to their conventional role as passive and covert observers, moles within anti-Fascist organisations, with the task of reporting, disrupting, provoking and deceiving, but instead took the initiative to eliminate personally their victims. On 4 August 1931, the *fiduciario* in Broken Hill, Alvisio Oliviero, a person whom Grossardi described as "favourably known to this office...of proven Fascist faith", confessed to the Vice-Consul in Adelaide, Giuseppe Amerio, that he had been guilty of arson and attempted murder against Giacomo Pastega, a leading Anarchist in the mining centre. "The house where he was living with two other Italians" wrote Oliviero, "went up in smoke, together with all his possessions, prints, books, flags, photograph of [Anarchist chief Errico] Malatesta and comrades...In confidence I must tell you that the fire was lit by a single match...Pastega stored under the floor a box of gelignite, I was hoping that he also would be blown up, but the firemen arrived in time to put out the flames before the floor ignited". Pastega was already known to Oliviero before they both emigrated to Australia; in fact Oliviero had been instrumental in the arrest of Pastega and his accomplice, Giovanni Saccardo, when the two Anarchists threw some bombs into the textile mills at Schio (Vicenza) (28).

However, it was the threat of terrorist acts and plots against the life of Mussolini, King Victor Emmanuel III or of Fascist *gerarchi* (bosses) that most concerned the Chief of Police, Bocchini. In Australia, as in other countries where the *fuorusciti* (exiles) had established their conspiratorial networks, Mussolini's Consuls kept a close watch on whoever had a turbulent or violent past. The files of the *Casellario Politico Centrale* contain undisputable evidence that many anti-Fascists, who had been victims of Fascist violence before emigrating to Australia, once they landed in this country committed violent acts of reprisal against known Fascists, Italian diplomatic staff and sympathisers of the Regime. For instance, Luigi Betta and Silvio Gatti, former members of the Communist paramilitary formations *Arditi del Popolo*, described as "dangerous tools in the hands of the leaders", were reported on 14 August 1933 by the Prefect of Alessandria to the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* as "Communists who beat up [in Australia] those nationals of ours who manifest patriotic attitudes" (29). The Prefect of Terni, reporting on 31 January 1931 to the Ministry of the Interior on the Anarchist Pietro Sebastiani, mentioned that "several times he had been beaten by the Fascists", while the Prefect of Treviso, in a note dated 5 October 1928, admitted that the Communist Graziadio Socal "had been the target of reprisals on the part of Fascist elements of Cavaso and Possagno...and forced to emigrate". On 18 November 1932, the Prefect of Udine reported that Carlo Simeoni had assaulted and injured in Melbourne Giona Zurini, a sailor of the

MV. *Viminale*, because the latter was sporting the Fascist Party badge on his lapel. The Prefect also added that Simeoni in Italy "was beaten up several times by the Fascists, because he was their sworn enemy" (30).



*Carlo [Carlton] Simeoni (right) and Bill Ermacora. Carlton (?), c.1930.*

Yet, it was the threats made by known 'subversives' like Giacomo Pastega that drove the Fascist espionage machine into greatest action. On 5 July 1932, following the execution in Rome of the Anarchist Michele Schirru after his failed attempt on Mussolini's life, Pastega wrote from Broken Hill to Guido Cristini, President of the Special Tribunal for the Defense of the State, warning him that he would meet an ugly death (*farete una morte brutta*) and boldly signing himself as "your implacable enemy" (*suo implacabile nemico*). Instructions were immediately imparted for Pastega's arrest in case he attempted to enter Italy. Similar apprehension orders were given on 12 February 1930 by Bocchini to all Prefects against Giovan Battista Perani, a

gold prospector in Western Australia, who "was reported of having expressed his intention to kill H.M. the King and H.E. the Head of Government" (31).

This was also the case for Giacomo Argenti, a casual labourer from Capoliveri, near Portoferraio on Elba, who aged 13, had already had a brush with the law when, in August 1897, he was fined 15 lire for bathing naked in the sea, and the following year for corresponding with the Anarchist paper *Il Libertario* (The Libertarian). In November 1911 Argenti emigrated to the United States and in 1912 he was classed by Liberal Italy's diplomatic representatives as a dangerous Anarchist to be put under surveillance. On his return to Italy, in October 1917, Argenti was sentenced to a jail term of three years after the Police found a cache of dynamite in his room at Capoliveri. In 1924, his name was found mentioned, as a subscriber of the Anarchist paper *Pensiero e Volontà* (Thought and Will), in the papers of Anarchist leader Errico Malatesta. In 1926 Argenti emigrated to Adelaide, where he found employment as a waterside worker, and in 1928 was joined by his wife Domenica and his son Gualberto. Incidentally, his wife had difficulty in obtaining her passport because, according to the Police, who did not miss an opportunity for casting uncorroborated aspersions upon the enemies of the Regime, "it was alleged that the Mayor of Capoliveri, who is her lover and who would suffer from her leaving the Kingdom...was recommending against the issuing her with a passport".

In November 1931 an anonymous letter alerted Adelaide's Fascist Consul that Argenti was plotting to kill Mussolini, but *Carabinieri's* enquiries ascertained that "Argenti, although an Anarchist, is unable to carry out or to organise such an act". However, when in February 1932 Argenti went back to his *paese* for a brief period of convalescence, upon his arrival in Genoa he was subjected to a thorough search of his luggage and sent to Capoliveri, where he would be kept under close surveillance, with a *foglio di via obbligatorio* (travel permit limited only to a destination approved by Police). In July 1932 Argenti returned to Adelaide, mentally depressed, politically demoralised and financially destitute. In 1936, while he was in a psychiatric hospital, his workmates assisted his family with a collection. Argenti's refractory life met with an inglorious and sad end. In May 1940, Consul-General Mario Lucioli reported that "he is no longer carrying out political activities; of late he seems to be sympathetic to the Regime, occasionally taking part in activities organised by the *Fascio*". In the same year, the once diehard Anarchist sent a petition to Mussolini, seeking his assistance to send his son, by then enrolled in the *Fascio's* school, to Italy to study singing (32).

Another migrant categorised in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* as dangerous and to be arrested was the already mentioned Isidoro Bertazzon. The Prefect of Treviso, in a note in May 1929, described him as "voracious reader of Anarchist books and pamphlets ... Although he frequented only the primary school, he displays a quick and keen intellect". Already in February 1918, during World War I, Bertazzon, who had emigrated to the United States, attracted the attention of the Italian Military Censorship, that seized his subscription letter to the Anarchist paper, *Il Libertario* of La Spezia,

containing 12 dollars and his pledge "to contribute financially to the outbreak of a Bolshevik revolution in Italy". The Consul-General of New York was instructed to alert the American Department of Immigration, which immediately proceeded to raid Seattle's Anarchist *Circolo di Studi Sociali* and arrested Bertazzon and 31 other Italian emigrants at gunpoint. Soon after, Bertazzon was able to escape from detention and, for many months, eluded capture. Eventually, in 1919, he was deported to Canada (33). The transcripts of the interrogation of the 31 Anarchists were forwarded by the American authorities to the Italian Consul-General in New York and can be found in Bertazzon's file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*, yet more evidence of inter-governmental collaboration against refractory migrants.



*A gathering at the Bertazzon family home, Carlton, in 1926. Included are Isidoro and Luigi Bertazzon.*

In June 1921 Bertazzon obtained a passport from the Consulate-General in New York and returned to Italy, where he was immediately put under close surveillance by the *Carabinieri* (*fatto segno ad attenta vigilanza da parte dell'Arma*), only to emigrate again, this time to Australia, in August 1922. In Melbourne he soon distinguished himself, in the words of Consul-General Grossardi, as "one of the most dangerous adversaries of the Regime". In January 1923 the Police raided his mother's house at Pieve di Soligo (Treviso) and seized an amount of "subversive correspondence". In

September 1927, Grossardi, in a telegram betraying his increasing frustration and his advocacy of a violent solution against the Melbourne anti-Fascist, reported to the Ministry of the Interior that "some Fascists are at present keeping under observation a Greek Club, frequented by Bertazzon, in the hope of finding him and giving him a good beating...It is a matter of time and patience before he will get a well earned punishment". Grossardi also took pains to vilify the Anarchist on moral grounds, claiming that "he works when he feels like...he is maintained by his brother... and it is rumoured that he is the lover (*sia in illeciti rapporti*) of his sister-in-law". As well, the Italian diplomat unsuccessfully tried to have Bertazzon deported by the Australian authorities. On 28 October 1929 he advised Rome that, "despite my efforts, I have been unable to persuade these authorities to proceed against him. Nevertheless I will continue to insist, and even today I made new representations to this effect".

Bertazzon represented a constant worry for Grossardi, the Melbourne *Fascio* and even the Chief of Police, Bocchini, who, in January 1929, ordered the Consul-General to "intensify measures of careful vigilance of the notorious Anarchist Bertazzon Isidoro, taking care to wire me every useful information and movements". Following Bocchini's instructions, Bertazzon was assiduously watched by Fascist spies, who determinedly recorded his persistent anti-Fascism (*mantiene cattiva condotta politica*). In 1929 an informer from Geneva reported that Bertazzon was subscribing to anti-Fascist literature and financially helping his comrades, and his name was also found mentioned in the papers of Camillo Berneri, the Anarchist treacherously befriended by OVRA's spy, Ermanno Menapace (34). In 1937, yet another informer signalled that Bertazzon was corresponding with the Anarchist *Pro-Spagna* Committee in Paris. His file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* contains monthly reports, throughout the 'Thirties, on his movements and activities, even after his retirement in 1935 to an orange farm in Beelbangera, near Griffith (NSW) and the surveillance continued until Bertazzon's tragic death in October 1941, when his car was hit at a railway crossing by a passing train (35).

Another migrant who had his file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* stamped as *attentatore - pericoloso* (terrorist - dangerous) was Angelo Cunial. He was suspected of being behind the 1928 gelignite attack on the homes of some Broken Hill Fascists, and, in the same year, was found guilty of assaulting and injuring Giovanni Puccini, because the latter was a Fascist. Earlier Cunial had been sentenced *in absentia* by the Court in Treviso to a jail term of two years and six months and a fine of 3,000 lire for sending a letter to the Mayor of Possagno, in which he insulted "that snake, Mussolini" and declared that "our action must always be sustained by words, writings, the knife and dynamite" (36). A more puzzling case was that of Francesco Sannazzaro. On 25 June 1934, the Melbourne Consul, Enrico Anzilotti, cabled the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that "it has been reported to me that Francesco Sannazzaro is planning to go to Italy, to take the life of H.E. the Head of Government. Sannazzaro...has a knife scar on his left cheek and is affected by syphilis at its last stage. He would go to Rome on the pretext of

medical care for his illness. The attack would be made with a bomb". Anzilotti also disclosed the names of other alleged conspirators, Angelo Colladetti and Carlo Simeoni. Obviously briefed by a mole attending the meetings of the group, the Melbourne Consul was able to report three days later that "the project was planned in Simeoni's home...I was told that Simeoni is the main organiser and the major financial contributor to the project". On 24 September 1934, Bocchini cabled the *Direzione Affari Generali e Riservati* the information that another migrant, Mirko Da Cortà, a stalwart of the Matteotti Club in Melbourne and close associate of Carmagnola, also registered as *attentatore - pericoloso*, was an accomplice in Sannazzaro's criminal endeavour. When Da Cortà travelled to Italy in September 1934, the police were convinced that he was preparing the attack. Despite orders in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* to arrest Da Cortà, on 30 July 1934 the Ministry of the Interior instructed the Border Police to "let him freely disembark, search carefully his baggage only from a customs point of view and strictly watch him". Needless to say, the attempt on the Duce's life never materialised, and this scourge of Fascism inexplicably became a turncoat. On 16 July 1938, Da Cortà petitioned the Minister of the Interior to be removed from the list of subversives because, as he put it, "I confess my sin...I never shared the ideas of these people, I never subscribed to their political credo...I became involved in an incident and was unfortunately considered and card-indexed as an accomplice of these lost people". His name was soon after removed from the list. One wonders whether Da Cortà was 'worked on' by the police and persuaded to collaborate, as was the case for so many anti-Fascists at home and abroad at that time (37).



*Carlo Simeoni (left) and Antonio Grotto taking part in a May Day rally. Carlton, c. 1938.*

By the end of the 'Thirties, OVRA did not restrict its spying activities exclusively to the enemies of Fascism, but extended them to Italian society in general and to dissident, discontented and dishonest Fascists in particular. In order to avoid being obstructed by rival law enforcement agencies, in 1932-33 OVRA's *Zona 2*, based in Bologna, unleashed its officers against these new targets by providing them with a fanciful cover. Senior officers were given the title of *possidenti* (property owners), while agents got the less impressive qualifications of drivers, mechanics and manual labourers (38). In view of this novel approach, it is unclear whether the only self-declared *possidente* among Italians in Australia, Francesco Amendola, was an undercover OVRA operative. Amendola had a *Casellario Politico Centrale* file opened on him when in September 1938 the police intercepted a letter to his sister in Lipari, in which he complained that "Mussolini, by keeping too many irons on the fire, will end by burning his hands...he will ruin Italy...Business in Europe is so bad that one can expect any day a cataclysm". While many others would end badly for much less, Amendola not only emerged unscathed from this brush with Fascist 'justice', but Consul-General Amedeo Mammalella on 7 August 1939 vouched to the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* that Amendola was a "person favourably known to the Consulate-General in Sydney. He is held in great consideration by his compatriots and does not harbour sentiments contrary to Fascism" (39).

At times, the humiliation inflicted on the wives and the next-of-kin of indicted 'subversives' was distressing and unnecessary. If resident in Italy, they were subjected to vexing and intimidating searches by the police who seized any document which could be used against the refractory migrant or to trace his whereabouts. If returning to Italy, they were a victim of harsh treatment. Indicative of this plight was the case of the wife of Anarchist Giovanni Terribile Antico. When, in November 1927, Isabella Lievore went to Italy on board the MV *Caprera* to undergo surgery, despite the fact that, as acknowledged by the police, "she was a fervent Catholic", she was arrested in Naples, detained for four days, then allowed to proceed for Vicenza with a *foglio di via obbligatorio*. After the operation, on 10 August 1928 Isabella attempted to cross the Swiss border to go to Zurich, where she planned to meet her brother Giovanni and his gravely ill wife, but was sent back to Piovone by the Fascist border guards. Giovanni Terribile's brothers, Giuseppe, Luigi and Antonio, all in Australia, were also spied upon by *Fascio's* cronies. Giuseppe, who, according to disparaging remarks made by Consul-General Grossardi, "had been a Communist only because he wanted to get a job", was cut from the *Rubrica di Frontiera* in May 1930, and the same measure was taken in June 1930 with regard to his Anarchist brother Luigi, because they ceased being active in their opposition to Fascism. Antonio was now employed by Prince Alfonso Del Drago, a notorious Fascist and President of the Italian Returned Soldiers Association, and as an informer reported, had been "given a glowing

recommendation" by the Prince (40). Harassment of members of the Antico family visiting or living in Italy was not unique. In February 1936, Carmelo Arico, a Broken Hill blacksmith alleged that he had been included in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* because he was falsely accused of selling images of Matteotti and of being a Communist while in fact he was a devoted Catholic (*risulta essere molto religioso*). He complained to the Consulate-General that "his family in Italy is continuously raided by police officers for enquiries on his account" (41).

A special case was that of Ernesto Baratto, a peasant from Paese (Treviso) who in 1925 emigrated to Tully (Qld). His entry in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* classified him as "Socialist, dangerous, naturalised, to be arrested". In 1929 Baratto provoked the ire of the Fascist authorities in Treviso when he anonymously mailed copies of *Il becco giallo* (The Yellow Beak), a paper printed in Paris by the anti-Fascist organisation Giustizia e Libertà, to people in Italy who were investigated by the police, only to be found proven Fascists. His identity was established only following a calligraphic comparison with letters seized from his father in Paese. In January 1930 the Consul in Brisbane, Gabrio Asinari, Count of San Marzano, described Baratto as "one of the staunchest propagandists against the Regime...unrepentant, despite the appeals made by the Consular Agent,...capable of committing some hostile act against the Regime". In November 1933, the Prefect of Treviso endorsed the Consul's assessment and warned the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* that "the opinion of him being exceptionally dangerous, beside his behaviour abroad, is based on the content of his letters to the parish priest of Paese in which he expressed dark ideas and a fierce resentment against the Duce and the Regime, and remarkable mental imbalance". However, Carmine Senise, who in 1940 would succeed Bocchini as Chief of Police, did not agree with the Prefect, and in December 1933 Baratto's name remained on the *Rubrica di Frontiera*, with instructions "to detain" (*da fermarsi*), but was taken off the list of "subversives, attempting to (*attentatori*) or capable of committing terrorist acts".

When, in January 1937, Baratto left Australia on the MV *Strathaird*, bound for Marseilles, to join the International Brigades in Spain – the money for the passage was lent to him by the Mourilyan Committee against War and Fascism –, the police intensified their interception of his letters to his father. In February 1938 Baratto wrote to his father that, "while you are telling me that you have not received news from me since last August, I have written to you every month; probably [the letters] have been lost". In fact, they ended in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* and are a poignant testimony on how he tried not to have his father harassed on his account. On 15 July 1937, Baratto advised "to write always in France [to a safe house address] to avoid persecution; [maintain that] you have nothing to do with me. Courage, always". When his suitcases were forwarded by mistake by the safe house to his father, rather than to his Spanish address, the old man refused to take delivery of them. They were seized by the Fascist authorities, who found them full of anti-Fascist literature. Baratto

despaired of seeing his father again. On 9 April 1937 he complained that "my passport is valid for the whole world, except for where I was born. I will stay in Europe a few years, then I will go back to Australia; English traditions are more suited to my temperament". On 4 April 1939, Consul-General Amedeo Mammalella cabled Rome that Ernesto Baratto had returned to Australia from Spain. He was the only Italian migrant in Australia who joined the International Brigades, although on 10 October 1938 the Prefect of Brescia made enquiries with the Ministry of the Interior to ascertain whether another migrant, the Communist Giovanni Poli, a resident of Boulder (WA), did "enlist in the Spanish Red militias" (42).

One of the most remarkable aspects of Fascist monitoring of dissent was the long, dogged pursuit and the perseverance shown by officers of the *Casellario Politico Centrale* in updating the files of refractory migrants, even of those living in far away, low risk, low priority Australia. Undoubtedly, the prize for being the most 'sought after' dissidents must go to Francesco Sceusa and to Ferdinando Bentivoglio. Sceusa, the archetypal Socialist battler, editor of Australia's first paper in Italian, Sydney's *Italo-Australian*, emigrated to Sydney in December 1877, returned to his native Trapani in January 1908 and died there on 21 June 1919. He was still technically under surveillance on 12 December 1935, when officers of the *Casellario Politico Centrale* complained to the Prefect of that city that they had not received an update on the 'subversive' since July 1913.

Ferdinando Bentivoglio, who had been administrator of Turin's Socialist paper *Il grido del popolo* (The People's Cry), emigrated to Sydney with his family in 1898. During that year, he and a small band of Socialists were indicted by Interpol and by the NSW Investigation Branch for their Socialist propaganda activities (43), and his name was entered in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*. After the First World War, Bentivoglio, who at that time was teaching Italian at Sydney's Conservatorium of Music, underwent a political conversion and joined the Fascist camp. In October 1929, Consul Mario Carosi described him as "nurturing very high patriotic sentiments, a sincere apologist of the Fascist Regime". Following this reference, his name was taken off the list of 'subversives'. However, he still remained under police surveillance. On 24 March 1942, the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza*, obviously intercepting his correspondence, entered in his file the note that, "until 1935, Bentivoglio corresponded with his sister-in-law, but since then he has not sent news about himself" (44).

Even as late as 6 March 1943, on the eve of the collapse of the Regime and at a time when the fortunes of war were clearly not favouring the Axis Powers, the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* instructed the Prefect of Vicenza to find Primo Berlato, a Communist who, until 1939, was living in Cairns and in 1941 had moved to Portugal (45). Perhaps the most emblematic case is that of Giuseppe Carpigo, registered in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* with instructions "to arrest". Carpigo, who has an entry in his *Casellario Politico Centrale* file dated 31 August 1894, as "one of the most dangerous and fanatical Anarchists", emigrated to France in 1891, but was

deported in 1893 after a conviction for illegally printing currency (*per fabbricazione di monete false*). In 1894 he was put under house arrest (*domicilio coatto*) at Velletri, escaped, was recaptured in Naples, escaped again in 1895 and disappeared into thin air. From then on, he became a sort of faceless Anarchist Scarlet Pimpernel (the police had only one 1893 photo of him), his presence being signalled simultaneously in various places. On 16 April 1915, the Prefect of Rome was able to report to the Ministry of the Interior that "his relatives believe that he is in Australia, but have not heard from him from a long time (*da molto tempo non da più notizie dell'esser suo*). Melbourne Consul Emilio Eles, having duly enquired with the Commonwealth and State police, advised the Ministry of the Interior that Carpigo was not in fact in Australia. However, the myth of this dangerous terrorist roaming free down-under persisted, despite the warning received on 26 November 1934 from the French *Sûreté Nationale* that Carpigo was a resident of the United States and should be watched during the wedding of the Duke of Kent. Most probably, it never crossed Melbourne Consul Enrico Anzilotti's mind that, quite likely, Carpigo had never set foot on Australian soil. As late as on 29 October 1936, Anzilotti was still cabling Rome that the Anarchist's Australian address "is still unknown". Another elusive Anarchist, deemed dangerous by the Ministry of the Interior, was Umberto Maggiani from La Spezia. On 21 January 1927 Maggiani had been sentenced *in absentia* to 5 years' *confino*, to be served in Cologna (Teramo). However, he could not be traced, and remained a fugitive (*latitante*) until 14 February 1932, when he foolishly wrote a letter to his Anarchist comrade from La Spezia Pasquale Binazzi, a missive that was promptly intercepted by the Italian censors. By October 1932, Maggiani's whereabouts were located by spies of the Consulate-General in Sydney: he was quietly living in Woolloomooloo, employed as a fisherman, safely out of reach of Fascist justice (46).

Indeed, this obsession by Fascist detectives for knowing always, everything, everywhere, did sometime defy logic. For example, the day after the fall of Fascism, on 26 July 1943, in the midst of the understandable chaos, the Ministry of the Interior, blithely sought information on Avendrace Camba, a sail-maker who had emigrated to Fremantle in far off 1925. The Prefect of Cagliari replied the same day that "we are not able to give further information on the person in question, as the police records have been destroyed by enemy bombing" (47). Anti-Fascist migrants continued to be watched by the *Servizio Informazioni Militari* (Italian Military Intelligence) even after their internment by Australian military authorities after the outbreak of the Second World War. On 30 June 1943, the Ministry of the Interior cabled the Prefect of Alessandria that "the High Command advised that the *fuoruscito* [Mario Cazzulino], interned in Sydney, is trying to carry out – with the consent of the enemy – defeatist propaganda among our soldiers, prisoners-of-war in Australia". As a consequence, Cazzulino's classification in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* was upgraded from "search and watch" to "arrest" (48).

Surveillance was carried out by Fascist agents not only on activities organised by dissident Italians. It also encompassed the transfer of money by the enemies of Fascism in Australia to fund political initiatives in Europe. Remittances to Anarchist leader Malatesta in Switzerland by Bertazzon were closely monitored by Fascist informers and reported to the Ministry of the Interior. Another so-called *fiduciario* on 14 March 1935 cabled the *Divisione Polizia Politica* that "funds, for a total amount of 230 Swiss Francs, collected by Boito Antonio among Anarchists living in that region [Griffith, NSW], have been remitted to Geneva, to be used for the anti-Fascist struggle and for the *Soccorso Anarchico Italiano* (Italian Anarchist Relief)" (49).

Quite a lot of intelligence on the opposition to Fascism abroad was gathered by the Fascist authorities, through the interception, as well as the seizing, of correspondence. This was achieved either through a blanket search of all correspondence originating from cities with a high concentration of refractory migrants, like Paris, Geneva and New York, with the obvious consequence of long delays in its delivery, or by targeting selected recipients, whose relatives had a file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*. The task of intercepting, reading, copying and forwarding information and making recommendations to the *Casellario Politico Centrale* fell on the Prefects, who also used fanciful circumlocutions to justify their breach of privacy. For instance, when it was opened and its contents read by staff of the Prefecture, the letter "underwent a revision" (*è stata revisionata*) and, if the decision was taken not to forward it to the recipient, it was "taken out of its course" (*è stata tolta di corso*) There is also circumstantial evidence that, at times, the Australian postal authorities connived with the Consuls in this activity, which was clearly illegal in Australia. On 4 May 1934 and again on 24 July 1934, Consul-General Ferrante wrote to Mussolini that "anti-Fascist propaganda is being almost always seized and destroyed by Australian Customs in Townsville...It is upon my personal suggestion that the Officer-in Charge of Customs confiscates and burns similar material" (50) Also, many recipients, either because they were staunch Fascists or because they were too scared to hold onto compromising evidence, denounced their receipt to the local *Fascio*, the *Carabinieri* or the police. For instance, the mail directed to Baratto's father, Antonio, was routinely opened, even when the sender was not his son Ernesto (51), and a copy of the underground Communist paper *L'Unità*, sent in July 1937 from Halifax (Qld) by Oreste Bosco to his brother Alfredo, who happened to be the law-abiding sacristan of a local Parish church, predictably ended in the hands of the Police (52). Another migrant, Francesco Campanaro, a carpenter living in North Sydney, fell in disgrace in February 1936, during the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, because an otherwise innocent letter to his father, opened by the Fascist censor, contained a reference to "that madman in Rome, who should be sent to those lands, and if someone would take him forever out of this world, it would be much better for everybody" (53). Yet another migrant, Achille Castelli, a subscriber to *Giustizia e Libertà*, who in August 1938 sent a letter to the Secretary of the Corfino (Lucca) *Fascio*, containing the

irreverent verse *Mussolini ha fondato un impero e l'Italia si ciba di pane nero* (Mussolini founded an empire, but Italy is eating black bread), sparked a flurry of activity to identify and punish the culprit. Only more than one year later, on 7 October 1939, was the Ministry of the Interior able to advise the Prefect of Lucca that "he is living in a farm called Vanget Station, in the district of Geraldton [WA]. It is not possible, at least now, to ascertain Castelli's political activities and behaviour, as he is living totally isolated, in a place far away from any township, where no other Italians are living". The Melbourne Consulate, on 4 January 1940, reassured the Ministry, with unintended irony, that "his abode is such that one can exclude any political activity" (54).

One of the main planks of the Regime's policy towards the anti-Fascist diaspora was of not opposing, indeed of facilitating the return to Italy, to visit or to re-settle, of the relatives of its declared enemies and even, in some cases, to favour the return of indicted 'subversives'. Its aim was to sow dissent among anti-Fascists, as well as to create conditions favourable to the enlisting, by means of bribery, blackmail or brainwashing, of disillusioned anti-Fascists in the Fascist camp. This policy was clearly enunciated in December 1930 by the Ministry of the Interior to the Consul-General in Sydney, when Grossardi was instructed that, "in respect of *atti di chiamata* submitted by subversives, the diplomatic and consular representatives must not hinder even politically compromised people who wish to be reunited with their next-of-kin. Contrary behaviour, in fact, would be against our political interests because, while it would not achieve the subversives' repentance, it would sow hatred and resentment, mainly among people with low education, and would deepen even further the cleavage between good and bad Italians living abroad, cleavage that our Royal representatives must instead and by all means eliminate and not deepen" (55). However, this policy had its exceptions. When Beniamino Zadra, brother-in-law of one of Melbourne's most prominent anti-Fascists, Ottavio Brida, requested a passport to go to Australia, he was refused it by the Prefect of Trento on grounds that "it would be highly probable that Zadra, once abroad, will allow himself to be influenced by his brother-in-law and become an anti-Fascist" (56). It was this 'stick and carrot' strategy adopted by the Fascist authorities that enticed many once irreconcilable anti-Fascists, in Europe as well as in Australia, to cave in, compromise, even to change sides and become Fascist *fiduciari*. The history of anti-Fascism in Australia does record unfortunate cases of *voltagabbana*, of a turncoat who could now be taken out of the list of subversives because, as Mussolini's diplomats happily reported, "he is favourably known to this Consulate". It is also a history of disappointment, of crisis of ideas, similar to the other crisis in the late 'Thirties and early 'Forties, when, conversely, many young Fascists would become highly critical of the Regime and even join the Resistance, as vividly documented in the autobiographical works by Davide Lajolo, *I "voltagabbana"* (The Turncoats), and by Ruggero Zangrandi, *Il lungo viaggio attraverso il fascismo* (The Long Journey through Fascism) (57).



*Ottavio Brida (third from left) with his cousins in the village of Tres (Trento), 1924.*

The files of the *Casellario Politico Centrale* contain ample evidence of scores of migrants in Australia who, during their long journey through Fascist persecution, conceded defeat, aided in their renunciation of the anti-Fascist cause by willing Fascist Consuls. When, in December 1930, Clemente Avanzini, a Socialist timberjack from Busselton (WA), was confronted by Consul-General Grossardi and reprimanded for his political stand, he replied, "with tears in his eyes", that he was now trying to convince his comrades to recant their Socialism, and begged the diplomat to send him Fascist propaganda literature to counter the anti-Fascist papers received in Western Australia from Paris and New York. On 12 December 1938, Avanzini's name was cancelled from the register of subversives. Another migrant who experienced the Consular wrath was the Communist Paolo Meacci. Upon his arrival in Perth from Pistoia in November 1927, Meacci "was warned (*diffidato*) by that Royal Office not to profess any longer subversive ideas". Having abstained from political activity following this effective consular intimidation, on 22 October 1929, Meacci's name also was taken out from the register of subversives (58). Another case in point was that of Francesco Bonaguro, a Communist from Broken Hill (NSW), registered in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* as "dangerous, to be arrested", who, together with his brother Girolamo, in 1927 assaulted and injured the Sartori brothers, "only because he believed that they were Fascist". In December 1930, Bonaguro sought the Consul-General's permission to bring to Australia his wife Vittoria Santo. Grossardi cabled his consent to the Ministry of the Interior on grounds that "Bonaguro, having watered down considerably his subversive stand, is now showing respect for the Regime". Vittoria Santo left Italy for Broken Hill on 5 February 1931.

Even Giuseppe Manera, the well-known leader of Broken Hill anti-Fascists and President of the Lega Antifascista, cited as dangerous in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*, and self-confessed participant in several acts of violence against Fascist Italians, upon his return to Treviso, on 22 May 1929, blatantly denied in a statutory declaration to the *Questura* having ever been involved in anti-Fascist activities. By contrast, Girolamo Bonaguro, also a Communist and registered in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* as "dangerous, to be arrested", remained unrepentant in his anti-Fascism. Described by the *Divisione Polizia Politica* as "the worst possible element, Communist and a rabid adversary of the Regime, violent, of exceptional strength, lording over the township", Girolamo, to the chagrin of Broken Hill Fascists incited the workers of the local copper and iron ore mines to strike in case employment was offered to the already mentioned Alvisè Oliviero, a Fascist newly arrived from Italy. On the other hand, his brother Giovanni Bonaguro, also living in Broken Hill, and with a file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* because of his anti-Fascism, by May 1934, as reported to the Ministry of the Interior by Consul-General Ferrante, "seemed to be favourably disposed towards the National Fascist Party". Accordingly, in January 1935 his name was deleted from the list of subversives (59).

Perhaps the most blatant attempt to ingratiate himself with the representatives of the Regime was that made by Antonio Canu, a Communist sailor, who in February 1927 deserted from the MV *Re d'Italia* in Brisbane and settled in Texas (Qld). Canu, who until 1931 was still publicly venting his spleen against the Regime and its Government, by July 1933 was, in Consul-General Ferrante's words, "managing a tobacco plantation known as *The Alalà Plantation* [from the Fascist war-cry] and was noted for his constant praises of the Authorities and the Regime". On 3 October 1934 his name was taken off the list of subversives (60). Another migrant more than ready to please was Albino Dalla Valle, once a Communist shopkeeper who, in June 1934, complained to the Italian Consul in Adelaide that the *Carabinieri* had visited his mother in Italy seeking a "lot of information on my account, asking for my photograph and whether I owned property". Instead, Dalla Valle proclaimed to the Consul his unswerving allegiance to the Duce, offering as proof the fact that, "on many an occasion I raised on the roof of my shops our tri-coloured flag" (61). Yet another repented 'subversive' was Filippo Maria Bianchi, a former Army Lieutenant, who, according to his file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*, after the First World War turned to Communism, became a member of the *Arditi del Popolo* and a leader of punitive expeditions against Fascists. In 1923, he left Italy and reappeared in 1927 in Bombay, where he had inexplicably become Deputy Secretary of the local *Fascio*. In 1928 Bianchi arrived in Sydney. By June 1930 his standing in the Italian community of Sydney was such that the Prefetto of Ancona had no hesitation in recommending to the Ministry of the Interior that Bianchi be cancelled from the list of subversives, because "he always demonstrated feelings of a healthy patriotism and attachment to the Regime". Within 14 days, his active file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* was closed (62).



*Filippo Maria Bianchi, Director of the newspaper 'Il Giornale Italiano' (first from left, standing) during an afternoon of tennis at the Santoro family home. Kew, c1938.*

Perhaps the most striking case of diehard opponents of the Regime recycling themselves as impassioned admirers of the Duce was that of Domenico Frizza. Frizza emigrated to Melbourne in 1898 but, during the First World War, was working as a miner in Broken Hill. On 3 September 1917 he was sentenced by the local Court to six months' hard labour for being a member of an illegal association, the Syndicalist Independent Labour Party. Having served his term, Frizza was deported to England and, throughout the voyage on the MV *Gaika*, was kept in irons. On arrival in Tilbury, London Police jailed him for a further two days, as he refused to speak to them, and he was then put in the charge of Italian Consular staff. Frizza returned to Broken Hill during the 'Twenties, but, at the time of the Italian aggression against Ethiopia, he began to sing the praises of Mussolini's imperialist policy in Sydney's Fascist press (63).

However, during the 'Thirties, Fascism in Australia did not always forgive the actions of its repentant enemies. Not all stray sheep were unconditionally accepted into the black sheep's pen. For instance, Pasquale Pompilio, a Socialist migrant from Saracena (Cosenza), in 1937 applied to become a member of Melbourne's *Fascio*. His request was rejected on grounds that in 1921 Pompilio, together with his father and brothers, according to the Prefect of Cosenza, incited the population of Saracena to revolt against the local Council, and in order to quell the uprising, the police were forced to fire upon the rioters (*la forza pubblica per sedare la sommossa dovette fare uso delle armi*) (64).

Disillusioned and dissident Fascists, or Fascists who clashed with the consular authorities also fell in the dragnet of Fascist investigations. Typical was the case of the former *squadrista* Franco Battistessa and of Benedetto Borghetti and Emilio Ligustri, who, in May 1928, at a reception at the Paddington Town Hall in Sydney in honour of the newly arrived Consul-General Grossardi, interrupted the ceremony by accusing Grossardi, in front of 300 people, of gorging himself while the members of General Umberto Nobile's expedition to the North Pole were still missing (65). Battistessa and Borghetti were immediately expelled from the Fascist Party, and Ligustri was suspended indefinitely. Ligustri, in a despatch dated 1 March 1929 by the Prefect of Brescia to the Ministry of the Interior, was described as "a character unwilling to work, inclined instead to laziness and debauchery...ambitious...leaving [in Italy] his old father, his wife and two young children in the most squalid poverty, and no longer taking care of them nor corresponding with them". However, when the reverberations of the scandal died down, all three would be forgiven and quietly readmitted to the Party during the 'Thirties (66). Another "Fascist of the first hour" investigated by the Italian Police was Lorenzito Cappellari, entered in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* as a Republican, because he recanted Fascism after realising "it was not following Mazzinian theories". A disillusioned Cappellari then joined the anti-Fascist *Italia Libera* Movement, to become even more dejected when the latter was suppressed by the Regime. After this disappointing political experience, he laid low and opened with his brother a fruit shop in Neutral Bay, Sydney. Yet another "perfervid Fascist", Pietro Lanero, one of the founders of the *Fascio* of Cortemilio (Cuneo), emigrated to Melbourne in July 1927 and soon after joined the Anarchist Matteotti Club and during the 'Thirties the anti Fascist meeting place Villa Roma (67).



V. Ciotti (at steering wheel), F. Carmagnola (standing, with hat), L. Bertazzon (child in back seat), and others near the Matteotti Club. Melbourne 1927.

Sometimes people were branded with the mark of 'subversive' simply because a member of their family or some close friends served in anti-Fascist organisations. This guilty-by-association criterion was applied to the Carmignola family, who had no less than five of its members registered in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*. The father, Lino, a Socialist bricklayer "of extremely limited culture" who in the early 'Twenties "sympathised with Communism", on 31 January 1940 was described by the Prefect of Vicenza as a dignified, almost heroic, figure. "Constantly watched", he was "cautious and reserved" and, throughout the Fascist period, showed no sign of "orienting himself towards the Regime". Thus, the Prefect regretted to inform the Ministry of the Interior, "it must be assumed that he is persisting with his ideas" (68).

Much has been written elsewhere (69) about his most famous son, Francesco Giuseppe Carmagnola (he changed his surname in 1929), who was considered by the same Prefect to be "most dangerous" (*pericolosissimo*). A charismatic leader, engaging orator, indefatigable organiser, Carmagnola maintained his world-wide contacts with other Anarchists and his rage against dictators until his death in Lugarno, a suburb of Sydney, on 27 February 1986. In 1978, at the age of 78, he decided to go to Chile and see for himself, "what that dictator Pinochet had done to his people". Francesco's brother, Giovanni, who emigrated to Halifax (Qld) in October 1924, was also an Anarchist, venting his anger against the Regime mainly by mailing and distributing propaganda material. However, with the passing of the years, his anger subsided, and he retired to St Ives in Sydney, to grow tomatoes. On 6 December 1939, Consul-General Mammalella changed his classification from "to arrest" to "to search and watch" (70). Giovanni's sister, Antonia, emigrated to Australia with him in October 1924. Although not active politically, she was "considered generically suspect" because, as the Prefect of Vicenza put it on 16 December 1939, "she belongs to a family of subversives" (71). Her youngest brother, Silvio, who never emigrated to Australia, was also card-indexed, on grounds, as explained on 20 March 1928 by the same Prefect, "of the influence exercised on him by his subversive family". However, Silvio was a member of the Catholic Youth of his *paese*, San Vito di Leguzzano, was not considered dangerous by the local *Carabinieri*, was later a student at Milan's University of the Sacred Heart, and in 1930 volunteered to join the Air Force. On 30 June 1931, the Prefect of Vicenza admitted to the Ministry of the Interior that Silvio Carmignola "did never share the ideas of his family" and recommended that his name be taken out of the list of subversives. This was done on 12 July 1931 (72).

Fascist authorities quite often stated in their reports that the low level of formal education was the universal root-cause, the trigger of anti-Fascist behaviour. The Prefect of Livorno, reporting on an Anarchist labourer, believed that "he is deemed to be dangerous because he is ignorant and impulsive" (73). Government bureaucrats seldom ascribed to illiterate or semi-literate migrants the capacity to act intelligently, unless they were somehow endowed with this gift by having previously served in some branch

of the Establishment. For instance, in February 1934, the Prefect of Sondrio made an exception for one of the anti-Fascists living in Innisfail (Qld), because "he is a peasant, attended only the third primary, but for the fact that he served in the *Carabinieri* he was considered in his *paese* an intelligent person" (74). However, it was the intellectuals, the cultured enemies of Fascism who concerned most spies, informers, double-agents and servants of the Regime. The life-long campaign of misinformation, persecution and slander carried out against the most prominent anti-Fascist in Australia, the lawyer Omero Schiassi, has already been extensively documented (75). Yet, the efforts to demonise Schiassi were not an isolated instance. In May 1934, *Ciro Caldera*, a doctor and former member number 32 of the Masonic Lodge of Palazzo Giustiniani, dissolved by the Fascists in May 1925, was signalled by the Prefect of Turin to the Ministry of the Interior as "a very undesirable element, because his culture and his contacts in society allow him to badmouth Italy and Fascism in [Australian] intellectual circles". Caldera, who in February 1926 had been forced to leave Turin for Perth in order to escape squadrist violence, was indeed a refractory intellectual. In July 1930 the Perth Vice-Consul Renato Citarelli wrote to the Prefects of Turin and Verona that "I know that in Turin and Verona [he] has relatives and owns property. I am therefore asking for you to exercise on those relatives that well-meaning pressure that will compel Caldera to take a more honest attitude, more fitting to the honour of the Italian name. In case even these measures do not work, then I shall ask to apply against Caldera the special legislation that Fascist Italy has drafted in its defense [that is, legalising the expropriation of Caldera's property]". Soon after, at the end of 1930, Caldera sought and obtained a Certificate of Naturalisation, to thwart the Vice-Consul's plans (76).

The climate of mutual suspicion generated among Italians in Australia by covert Fascist surveillance is evidenced by many entries in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*. Migrants leaning towards the Regime were encouraged to watch over and report on their peers. Sometimes the charge did not stand a closer scrutiny, as it was motivated by vendettas or personal interest. Luigi Colbertaldo, for instance, a peasant living in Melbourne, was accused on 22 January 1931 by his employer, Ettore Passuello, of being "a wholehearted Communist propagandist" (*propagandista comunista di tutta forza*). The complaint was directed by Passuello to none less than the Secretary of the National Fascist Party in Rome, Giovanni Giuriati, not knowing that Giuriati on 7 December 1931 had been a victim of the much trumpeted 'Fascist change of the guard' and substituted at the helm of the Party by Achille Starace. Further enquiries proved the accusation groundless, as Passuello had shamelessly exploited Colbertaldo, refused to pay him three months' wages and was found guilty when sued by the latter (77).

It is in fact common to find in the files letters of complaint addressed to the Secretary of the *Fascio* of the migrant's birthplace, the Prefects, the Ministry of the Interior or even to the Duce. For example, in November 1929, a well known Melbourne Fascist, Vittorio Tabacchi, wrote to the *Fascio's* Secretary at Pieve di Cadore accusing his *paesani* Mirko Da Cortà and Giuseppe Ciotti of

anti-Fascism (78). Anti-Fascists retaliated by exposing known supporters of the Regime and former *squadristi* to the police, to left-wing organisations, Trade Unions, the Labor and Communist Parties. In September 1929 Giovanni Marchetti was assaulted and injured by anti-Fascists in Ingham (Qld) for his activities as a *squadrista* in Italy, and in, August 1936, the Fascist Giuseppe De Laurentis was reported to the Federal Government by Pietro Chemello, a cobbler from Wellington (NSW), as a "Fascist spy", with the result that the Investigation Branch put De Laurentis under surveillance and interviewed him about why he had not applied for a Certificate of Naturalisation (79).

Migrants could not even trust the institution to which they had traditionally been attracted, the Catholic Church. To their chagrin was soon found that some Church representatives had turned into Fascist apologists and even spies. On 20 April 1929, the Secretary-General of the Italian *Fasci* Abroad, Piero Parini, informed the Ministry of the Interior that "the Reverend Father Salza, who is carrying out in Australia an active and most effective work of Fascist propaganda...advised that Giuseppe Manera, former President of the Anti-Fascist League and well-known subversive, has returned to Italy. The Reverend Father Salza is bringing to our attention the opportunity for us to deny him permission again to leave the Fatherland" (80).

When a general picture of Fascist surveillance on the political activities of refractory migrants in this country is drawn, there are some aspects which are common to the *modus operandi* of Fascist espionage against its enemies in European countries, while other aspects are peculiar to the Australian situation. Of paramount importance was the role played by the Prefects in organising and directing anti-Fascist espionage. Although all spy agencies reported, through the Chief of Police, to the Minister of the Interior, that is, to Mussolini, it was the Prefects who were in charge of gathering and processing information on 'subversives', by feeding requests down the chain to Consul-Generals, Consuls, Vice-Consuls, *Fascio* Secretaries, *fiduciari*, informers, occasional whistleblowers and to people holding a personal grudge against anti-Fascists. The Prefects were also responsible of passing the information on to the *Casellario Politico Centrale* and to OVRA, as well as to recommend punitive measures against refractory migrants, to order the *Carabinieri* to search the homes of the relatives of anti-Fascists, to initiate legal proceedings, to deprive the 'culprits' of the Italian citizenship and to confiscate their assets. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that the distinguished economist and future President of the Italian Republic, Luigi Einaudi, in an article with the provocative title of "Away with the Prefect!" (*Via il Prefetto!*), published on 17 July 1944 under the pseudonym of Junius, lambasted the institution of Prefects and advocated its suppression because "Democracy and the Prefect are deeply repugnant to each other...Democracy will never be possible until there will be in existence the centralist government, of which the Prefect is its symbol". Unfortunately, his lonely cry was ignored by the legislators of Republican Italy, and the institution of the Prefect was preserved, often keeping at its helm the same compromised people, who, for many years, had blindly served their Fascist masters (81).

Another common aspect was the international dimension of surveillance. It was relatively easy to get into trouble with Fascist justice. Many people ended in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* only because they subscribed to anti-Fascist literature from overseas, like *Giustizia e Libertà's* paper *Il becco giallo*. The lists of subscribers were surreptitiously obtained by OVRA agents in France and Switzerland and transmitted, for appropriate action, to Italian diplomats in Australia. Surveillance was constant, close and carried out in a professional manner. Letters from and to Australia were screened with the same zeal and servile dedication as those addressed to or received from France, Spain, Switzerland or the United States. Yet another peculiar element, common to Fascist intelligence in Europe and Australia, was its dogged perseverance in gathering information on the moral as well as political behaviour of its victims. Undoubtedly, one of the motives was to gather ammunition to demonise or to discredit, at the right moment, its opponents.

Also, the life experience of Fascist and anti-Fascist migrants in Australia bore close resemblance to that of Fascist migrants and the *fuorusciti* in Europe, where some migrants changed political sides, some several times, and recycled themselves in the former enemy camp with astonishing adroitness. By the end of the 'Thirties, the anti-Fascists significantly cut their activities, demoralised by the international achievements of the Fascist Powers and worn out after so many years of struggle. The undisputable success of Fascism's grass root intelligence work kept the lid on any major public expression of anti-Fascism, prevented possible acts of terrorism, and instilled in the anti-Fascist camp the fear of being always under close scrutiny, the nagging doubt on the trustworthiness of their comrades, the suspicion that every move of theirs was known beforehand to the Fascist Consuls.

On the other hand, one of the key elements that clearly distinguished the refractory migrants in Australia from their *fuorusciti* comrades in Europe was their different social background and education. Mimmo Franzinelli, in his fine book on the history of OVRA, makes the point that, within the anti-Fascist diaspora in Europe, "the most represented groups were journalists and lawyers. Almost absent were the peasants, and workers were almost exclusively represented by 'Communists'. The lower middle class was present in significant numbers, in particular clerks and small businessmen, anxious to spy because it gave them a sense of power" (82). By contrast, the opposite can be said about Italian migrants in Australia, where there was an overwhelming representation of peasants and workers, semi-literate or illiterate, often humbly pursuing in secret their struggle. For this reason, perhaps, Australia did not host or produce many crafty double or triple agents, intellectual *agent provocateurs*, like Dino Segre, alias Pitigrilli, in Paris, who could trick their opponents into hopeless and compromising endeavours, destined to failure. In Australia, opposition was more humdrum and basic, as were the characters involved in it. Who was, then, the typical Fascist informer in Australia? The characterisation made by Italian historian Aldo Garosci of the lapsed *fuorusciti* neatly applies to Fascist moles in this

country, when he wrote that "the spies of emigration were mostly poor devils who, often without realising the seriousness of their actions, after many years of deprivation and unemployment, were feeding police with information on those who were attending meetings or frequenting anti-Fascist clubs" (83).

Another distinguishing factor was a greater difficulty in Australia for the Consuls to monitor the movements and the plans of dissident migrants. In the first place, throughout the 'Twenties and especially during the Depression, migrants had constantly to move in search of work, any kind of work, often interstate, frequently did not have a fixed address, and often did not write home, because they were ashamed of their failure to make a fortune or even to pay for the voyage to Australia of their family still in Italy, or because they knew that their mail could be intercepted by the Fascist censor. Also, in constant fear of being deported as a result of persistent Fascist representations to Australian authorities, many anti-Fascists took the Certificate of Naturalisation, thus evading to some extent the Fascist grip on their lives and availing themselves of the protection of the laws of the Commonwealth. Yet, this difficulty is even further evidence of the remarkable efficiency of the Consul's espionage network in its unrelenting task of preventing and repressing dissent. Incidentally, the files of the *Casellario Politico Centrale* exhaustively document the desperate economic plight of many migrants, some resorting to unconventional professions in order to earn a living, like Federico Gemmi and his son Antinesco, who, although living "in the most squalid poverty", in May 1937 were reported by Consul-General Paolo Vita-Finzi to stage illusionist shows (*rappresentazioni di fachirismo*) at Sydney's Circolo Isole Eolie (84).

In the final analysis, Fascist surveillance on Italians in Australia, as in other countries of strong anti-Fascist presence, despite falling far short from establishing a totalitarian control over its subjects, exploited the weakness of its victims and used them mercilessly to achieve its goals. The jurist Antonio Repaci exposed this aspect of Fascist *modus operandi* in its quest to achieve total conformism to its diktats, when he noted in 1956 that "Fascism found in every sector of Italian society its champions and super-champions of espionage, financed by OVRA, whose officers, cunningly led by the infernal Bocchini, were most able to put their finger on the wounds of unfulfilled ambitions, of small and big lies to cover, of vanities to satisfy, of pent-up resentments to let loose. The Regime deepened its already bloodied hands in this dunghill (*letamaio*), and on human material of this kind erected the granitic edifice of its security" (85).

In an interview published on 6 and 13 September 2003 by the British journal *The Spectator*, the Italian Prime Minister, *Cavaliere* Silvio Berlusconi, in one of his characteristically flippant outbursts, claimed that another *Cavaliere*, Benito Mussolini, "did not murder anyone. Mussolini sent people on holiday to confine them" (*il Duce non ha mai ammazzato nessuno, semmai mandava la gente in vacanza al confino*) (86). The fact is that 31 people were executed by firing squad by the Regime for their anti-Fascist activities between 1927

and 1943 and a further 22 between 1943 and 1945. Moreover, the price paid in human lives by Mussolini's colonial and imperial wars in Africa, the Mediterranean, the Balkans, Spain, Greece, the Soviet Union, the complicity in the extermination of Italian Jews, validate the claim that, according to Australian historian Richard Bosworth, "Fascism too, shed an excess of blood... Mussolini's Italian dictatorship must have sent early to the grave at least a million people, and probably more" (87). Also, the 12,330 people who had their lives broken by being sent, in some cases for the duration of the Regime, to *confino*, the 160,000 "politically admonished" or put under special surveillance, the 4,596 sentenced to jail terms totalling 27,735 years, did not feel they were on holiday. Similarly, the even greater number of *fuorusciti*, estimated to total approximately 70,000 in France alone (88), who were forced to leave Italy because their lives had been made impossible by Fascist beatings, harassment, violence and persecution, did not believe that theirs was a pleasant holiday abroad. On the contrary, theirs was a much harsher *confino*, potentially for the term of their natural life. Far away from their beloved and from the environment of their dialect, customs and familiar settings, living in a foreign and at times hostile country, often unemployed, shifting endlessly from one boarding house to another, moving from State to State, hounded by Fascist agents, aware that their mail was censored or seized, mistrustful of their comrades, sometime fearful for their life, in some cases still licking the wounds inflicted by Fascist thugs before their departure for Australia, harbouring a repressed feeling of revenge and of hatred, it is surprising that their frustration did not explode in more acts of reprisal, violence and retribution. Ultimately, by the passing of the years, this frustration understandably turned into dejection, resignation and even recantation. Only the strong would persist in carrying on with the struggle, despite mounting and bombastic Fascist international successes. Only the brave, like Ernesto Baratto, would go on crying the desperate, pathetic cry *No pasaran* (They shall not pass), when indeed Fascism was inexorably rolling over many countries and conquering many a conscience. Only the crazy, like Francesco Carmagnola and his friends, would go in 1938 on board the pride of the Italian Navy, the cruiser *Raimondo Montecuccoli*, whilst in Melbourne, to distribute to the sailors anti-Fascist literature. Only the fanatical would lay down their life for the cause, like Francesco Fantin, murdered in 1942 in the Australian internment camp of Loveday (SA) by a Fascist inmate. Only the unflinching, like Omero Schiassi would, against all odds, go on hoping in a future of freedom, in liberation from oppression. The story, the plight of these chosen few, is only a small, and one could say, insignificant aspect of the wider context of Australian history, indeed, of world history. Yet, it is important, because their dreams, their hopes, their actions and their sacrifice made in part possible for us to tell their story, today, in freedom. For this, they will be remembered.

## NOTES

- 1) Orwell, George, *Nineteen Eighty Four*, Penguin Books, London 1990.
- 2) Ministero dell'Interno, Dipartimento della Pubblica Sicurezza, Direzione Centrale della Polizia di Prevenzione. Lo Schedario Politico (1894), in:

[http://www.interno.it/sezioni/attivita/sicurezza/dip\\_ps/dcpp/s\\_000000293.htm](http://www.interno.it/sezioni/attivita/sicurezza/dip_ps/dcpp/s_000000293.htm)

- 3) *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, 11 July 2003.
- 4) Fondazione Fratelli Rosselli, *Il delitto Matteotti*, Notes by Enzo Cicchitto, in: <http://members.xoom.it/larchivio/matteotti.htm>. Also, Ministero dell'Interno, Dipartimento della Pubblica Sicurezza, Direzione Centrale della Polizia di Prevenzione. Dalla CEKA fascista all'OVRA, in: [http://www.interno.it/sezioni/attivita/sicurezza/dip\\_ps/dcpp/s\\_000000296.htm](http://www.interno.it/sezioni/attivita/sicurezza/dip_ps/dcpp/s_000000296.htm)
- 5) On the OVRA, see: Mimmo Franzinelli, *I tentacoli dell'OVRA. Agenti, collaboratori e vittime della polizia politica fascista*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino 1999. Also, Renzo De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. L'organizzazione dello Stato fascista 1925-1929*, Einaudi, Torino 1968, pp. 465-466.
- 6) Franzinelli, op. cit., pp. 63-64. Also, Mario Missori, 'I fuoriusciti antifascisti della sinistra non comunista nelle carte conservate nell'Archivio Centrale dello Stato', in: AA.VV., *L'emigrazione socialista nella lotta contro il fascismo. 1926-1939*, Sansoni, Firenze 1982, pp. 305-325. Also, Emilio Franzina, 'L'emigrazione schedata. Lavoratori sovversivi all'estero e meccanismi di controllo poliziesco in Italia tra fine secolo e fascismo', in: Bruno Bezza (Ed.), *Gli italiani fuori d'Italia. Gli emigrati italiani nei movimenti operai dei paesi d'adozione (1870-1940)*, Franco Angeli, Milano 1983, pp. 773-829. Also, Mario Serio, 'Le catalogue informatique du Casellario Politico Centrale: instrument pour l'histoire de l'émigration politique italienne' and Eric Vial, 'Le fonds du Casellario Politico Centrale à l'Archivio Centrale dello Stato', both in: CEDEI, *L'immigration italienne en France dans les années 20. Actes du colloque franco-italien, Paris 15-17 octobre 1987*, Paris 1988, pp. 15-46.
- 7) Franzinelli, op. cit., p. 473.
- 8) Ibid., p. 362.
- 9) Ibid., pp. 244, 474, 475n, 480. According to Franzinelli, Barletta was "one of the best officers of OVRA" (Franzinelli, op. cit., p. 251). Also, Ministero dell'Interno, Dipartimento della Pubblica Sicurezza, Direzione Centrale della Polizia di Prevenzione. Gli "Affari Riservati" nel dopoguerra, in: [http://www.interno.it/sezioni/attivita/sicurezza/dip\\_ps/dcpp/s\\_000000298.htm](http://www.interno.it/sezioni/attivita/sicurezza/dip_ps/dcpp/s_000000298.htm). On Lutri, see Franzinelli, op. cit., p. 474n. On Polito, see ibid., pp. 475-477. On Leto, see ibid., pp. 416, 419n, 477.
- 10) Franzinelli, op. cit., pp. 439, 458, 643-686. On the High Commission for Sanctions against Fascism, see Domenico Roy Palmer, *Processo ai fascisti. 1943-1948. Storia di un'epurazione che non c'è stata*. Rizzoli, Milano 1996.
- 11) Brunello Mantelli, 'Gli italiani nei Balcani. 1941-1943: occupazione militare, politiche persecutorie e crimini di guerra', in: Brunello Mantelli (Ed.), *Qualestoria*, Year XXX, No. 1, June 2002, pp. 19, 31n. On Italian war crimes, see: Davide Rodogno, *Il nuovo ordine mediterraneo. Le politiche d'occupazione dell'Italia fascista in Europa (1940-1943)*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino 2003. Also, Tone Ferenc, *La Provincia 'Italiana' di Lubiana. Documenti 1941-1942*, Istituto Friulano per la Storia del Movimento di Liberazione, Udine 1994.
- 12) *L'Indice*, No. 6, June 1996, p.5. Also, Franzinelli, op. cit., p. 479n. On Ignazio Spinelli, see ibid., p. 337.
- 13) On this, see: Richard Bosworth, University of Western Australia, 'Everyday Mussolinism: friends, family, locality and violence in Fascist Italy', unpublished paper, 2003. Also, by the same author, 'War, totalitarianism and "deep belief" in Fascist Italy, 1935-1943', unpublished paper, 2003. Also, Franzinelli, op. cit., p. 61.

- 14) Ware, Helen, *A Profile of the Italian Community in Australia*, Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs, Melbourne 1981, p.13.
- 15) See Table 1. Tables 1 to 4 are the outcome of an analysis of information contained in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* files on Italians who were living in Australia during the Fascist period. The data on computer printouts were prepared for the Author by staff of the Archivio Centrale dello Stato in 1989.
- 16) See Table 2. For a list of names by region, see Table 4.
- 17) See Table 3. The middle class and intellectual professions were the following: medical doctors (3), accountants (3), interpreters (1), lawyers (2), journalists (2), teachers (1), students (2), physicists (1) and agronomists (1).
- 18) Franzinelli, op. cit., p. 31. Also, Alberto Acquarone, *L'organizzazione dello Stato totalitario*, Einaudi, Torino 1965, p. 421.
- 19) Gianfranco Cresciani, *Fascism, Anti-Fascism and Italians in Australia. 1922-1945*, Australian University Press, Canberra 1980, pp.101-102. Also, Gianfranco Cresciani, 'Fascism and Italian Anarchists in Australia', in: *The Australian Quarterly*, Vol. 51, No. 1, March 1979, pp. 4-19.
- 20) Leonardo Bettini, *Bibliografia dell'Anarchismo*, Vol. 1, CP Editrice, Florence 1976, pp. 29-32.
- 21) Cresciani, *Fascism, Anti-Fascism etc.*, pp. 103-107.
- 22) Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome, Ministero dell'Interno, Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza, Casellario Politico Centrale (hereafter ACS/CPC), Berlato, Primo, busta 524, fascicolo 119333. For instance, Celestino Bosazza, a bricklayer from Townsville (Qld) who left Italy in 1910 and died in Randwick (NSW) on 1 November 1935, was listed in the Casellario Politico Centrale as "allegedly a Socialist" because, as the Prefect of Novara cabled the Ministry of the Interior on 13 February 1915, "it is assumed that he is a member of the official Socialist Party, however I cannot confirm it absolutely" (ACS/CPC, Bosazza, Celestino, b. 776, f. 34904).
- 23) ACS/CPC, Acquasaliente, Pietro, b.14, f. 79673. Also, ACS/CPC, Hojak, Cirillo, b. 2602, f. 46537. Also, ACS/CPC, Percich, Antonio, b. 3851, f. 96267.
- 24) ACS/CPC, Altomare, Leonardo, b. 80, f. 95162.
- 25) ACS/CPC, Bonfanti, Carlo, b. 726, f. 78984.
- 26) Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome, Ministero dell'Interno, Divisione Affari Generali e Riservati/J5/10, (hereafter ACS/J5/10), Antico, Giovanni Terribile. For the exchange of political information between the Commonwealth Investigation Branch, State Police agencies and Italian Consuls, see also: ACS/CPC, Capriotti, Vincenzo, b. 1055, f. 37267. Also, ACS/CPC, Canil, Pietro, b. 1005, f. 12542. Also, ACS/CPC, Cammerino, Pietro, b. 974, f. 46907. Also, ACS/CPC, Del Campo, Matteo, b. 1670, f. 46099. Further evidence of the exchange of political information between the Australian Authorities and the Fascist Consuls is given by the attempt, in June 1922, on the part of the Commonwealth, to prohibit entry to Australia of Giovanni Paglietta, because suspected of being a dangerous Communist. Eventually, he was allowed to settle on his brother's farm in Mareeba (Qld), following successful representations made by Consul-General Grossardi. It is interesting to note, however, that an entry in his *Casellario Politico Centrale* file, dated 23 November 1922, from the Prefect of Alessandria to the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* still considered him to be "a fearful subversive" (ACS/CPC, Paglietta, Giovanni, b. 3657, f. 82164). Also, on 5 June 1935, the Melbourne Consul reported to the Ministry of the Interior that a Communist immigrant, Amico Petrilli, was denied a Certificate of Naturalisation. "From information verbally given to the Acting Vice-Consul in Perth by the Inspector of the Investigation Branch", the Consul, cabled, "Petrilli sought to obtain a Certificate of Naturalisation, but the competent authorities rejected his

- application in consideration of his political background" (ACS/CPC, Petrilli, Amico, *b.* 3903, *f.* 116294).
- 27) National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A367, Control Symbol C69630, Barcode 782834, Security Service Dossier containing names of 50 interned Italian antifascists, Deputy Director-General of Security for Queensland to Director-General of Security, Canberra, 3 December 1942.
  - 28) ACS/CPC, Pastega, Giacomo, *b.* 3772, *f.* 28052. On Errico Malatesta, see Franco Andreucci and Tommaso Detti, *Il movimento operaio italiano. Dizionario biografico*, Editori Riuniti, Rome 1975, pp. 246-255.
  - 29) ACS/CPC, Betta, Luigi, *b.* 592, *f.* 116842. Also, ACS/CPC, Guidi, Abele, *b.* 2586, *f.* 16509.
  - 30) ACS/CPC, Socal, Graziadio, *b.* 4852, *f.* 1685. Also, ACS/CPC, Sebastiani, Pietro, *b.* 4722, *f.* 87667. Also, ACS/CPC, Simeoni, Carlo, *b.* 4815, *f.* 114559. See also the aggression against Mario Melano, Acting Vice-Consul in Townsville, carried out on 26 December 1931 by Francesco Carmagnola, Mario Tardiani and Tommaso Saviane, in: Gianfranco Cresciani, 'Fascism and Italian Anarchists in Australia', *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14. Also, ACS/CPC, Tardiani, Mario, *b.* 5030, *f.* 111347. Also, ACS/CPC, Saviane, Tommaso, *b.* 4630, *f.* 114313.
  - 31) ACS/CPC, Pastega, Giacomo, *b.* 3772, *f.* 28052. Also, ACS/CPC, Perani, Giovan Battista, *b.* 3848, *f.* 21650.
  - 32) ACS/CPC, Argenti, Giacomo, *b.* 184, *f.* 14013. Refractory migrants who were allowed to return to Italy, if registered in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* "to search and to watch", were subjected to a thorough search of their luggage and to close surveillance. This was the case for Nicola Battista, a Socialist who in December 1931 arrived in Naples on board the MV *Esquilino*, was searched and allowed to proceed for Foggia, "duly signalled to be located and watched". When, in March 1933, he departed for Australia on board the MV *Remo*, he was again "personally frisked" and his baggage searched "with negative result" (ACS/CPC, Battista, Nicola, *b.* 410, *f.* 2483).
  - 33) Bettini, *op. cit.*, p. 294.
  - 34) Franzinelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-209.
  - 35) ACS/CPC, Bertazzon, Isidoro, *b.* 551, *f.* 602.
  - 36) ACS/CPC, Cunial, Angelo, *b.* 1558, *f.* 31943.
  - 37) ACS/CPC, Colladetti, Angelo, *b.* 1406, *f.* 13702. Also, ACS/CPC, Da Cortà, Mirko, *b.* 1569, *f.* 41958. Also, ACS/CPC, Simeoni, Carlo, *b.* 4815, *f.* 114559.
  - 38) Franzinelli, *op. cit.*, p. 247, also pp.569-570.
  - 39) ACS/CPC, Amendola, Francesco, *b.* 98, *f.* 136556. During the Second World War Amedeo Mammalella would serve as Consul in Dubrovnik (Rodogno, *op. cit.*, pp. 63, 177, 245, 327, 332, 449, 452, 483).
  - 40) ACS/J5/10, Antico, Giovanni Terribile. Also, ACS/CPC, Antico, Giuseppe, *b.* 150, *f.* 3818. Also, ACS/CPC, Antico, Luigi, *b.* 150, *f.* 73703..
  - 41) ACS/CPC, Arico, Carmelo, *b.* 186, *f.* 66904. See also ACS/CPC, Berlato, Primo, *b.* 524, *f.* 119333, who in August 1939 enquired at the Sydney Consulate-General why the Police had asked his family in Vicenza for his photograph and his address in Australia, and expressed his concern if an investigation on his activities were opened. Sometime this process was reversed. Mario Auricchio, an anti-Fascist from Cairns (Qld), was identified by the Police in Naples when his photograph, forwarded by the Sydney Consulate-General, was shown to his sister Elvira (ACS/CPC, Auricchio, Mario, *b.* 216, *f.* 119206). Another migrant who complained on 23 April 1930 to the Melbourne Consul that his home in Italy had been searched and his wife harassed by the *Carabinieri* was the Socialist Vito Riggio from Vizzini (Catania). In fact, the *Carabinieri* removed, upon instructions from the Parish priest who had visited the home

- in order to bless it, a painting portraying a priest attempting to rape a naked woman (ACS/CPC, Riggio, Vito, *b.* 4322, *f.* 47209).
- 42) ACS/CPC, Baratto, Ernesto, *b.* 313, *f.* 33340. Also, ACS/CPC, Poli, Giovanni, *b.* 4058, *f.* 66797.
  - 43) See ACS/CPC, Sceusa, Francesco, *b.* 4682, *f.* 61659. On Sceusa, see Gianfranco Cresciani, 'Kookaburra e Kultur: Francesco Sceusa tra miti e realtà australiani', in: Romano Ugolini (Ed.), *Italia-Australia 1788-1988*, Edizioni dell'Ateneo, Roma 1991, pp. 261-275. Also, see Salvatore Costanza, *Socialismo, emigrazione e nazionalità. Tra Italia e Australia*, Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento Italiano, Trapani 1992. Also, see: Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Archivio Storico Diplomatico (hereafter MAE), Interpol, Conferenza anti-anarchica 1899-1901, *b.* 32, *f.* 8, Inghilterra. See also, MAE, Interpol, Anarchici in Italia, Inghilterra, ecc., 1877-1899, *b.* 34, *f.* 8, Inghilterra. See also, Gianfranco Cresciani, 'L'integrazione dell'emigrazione italiana in Australia e la politica delle Trade Unions dagli inizi del secolo al fascismo', in: Bruno Bezza (Ed.), *op.cit.*, pp. 330-331.
  - 44) ACS/CPC, Bentivoglio, Ferdinando, *b.* 505. Another emigrant who settled in Sydney in 1902 and found employment in a laundry shop was the Anarchist Enrico Bertoni. Still in February 1930 the Prefect of Bologna, upon request from the *Casellario Politico Centrale*, was endeavouring to find his address, but the consular authorities in Australia had lost trace of him since 1923 (ACS/CPC, Bertoni, Enrico, *b.* 582, *f.* 78752).
  - 45) ACS/CPC, Berlato, Primo, *b.* 524, *f.* 119333.
  - 46) ACS/CPC, Carpigo, Giuseppe, *b.* 1109, *f.* 51009. On Maggiani, see ACS/CPC, Maggiani, Umberto, *b.* 2917, *f.* 87471. On Pasquale Binazzi, see Franco Andreucci and Tommaso Detti, *Il movimento operaio italiano*, *op. cit.*, pp. 307-309.
  - 47) ACS/CPC, Camba, Avendrace, *b.* 967, *f.* 136701.
  - 48) ACS/CPC, Cazzulino, Mario, *b.* 1211, *f.* 120432.
  - 49) ACS/CPC, Boito, Antonio, *b.* 695, *f.* 122307.
  - 50) Franzinelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 238-240. Also, ACS/CPC, Chiarella, Giuseppe, *b.* 1292, *f.* 135267. Also, ACS/CPC, Governato, Luigi, *b.* 2492, *f.* 73053. Also, ACS/CPC, Tibaldi, Giovanni, *b.* 5091, *f.* 68303.
  - 51) ACS/CPC, Badesso, Giuseppe, *b.* 242, *f.* 127643. The Prefect of Treviso advised that "his letter from Australia, directed to Baratto Antonio, has been intercepted here...".
  - 52) ACS/CPC, Bosco, Oreste, *b.* 781, *f.* 131240. Also, ACS/CPC, Scagliotti, Vincenzo, *b.* 4647, *f.* 130858. Scagliotti also mailed a copy of *L'Unità* to his friend Boccalatte in Italy, who quickly consigned it to the *Carabinieri*.
  - 53) ACS/CPC, Campanaro, Francesco, *b.* 980, *f.* 125272.
  - 54) ACS/CPC, Castelli, Achille, *b.* 1167, *f.* 136764.
  - 55) ACS/CPC, Bonaguro, Francesco, *b.* 711, *f.* 20924.
  - 56) ACS/CPC, Brida, Ottavio, *b.* 838, *f.* 135649.
  - 57) Davide Lajolo, *I "Voltagabbana"*, Il Saggiatore, Milano 1963; Ruggero Zangrandi, *Il lungo viaggio attraverso il fascismo*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1964.
  - 58) ACS/CPC, Avanzini, Clemente, *b.* 218, *f.* 38951. See also the file of Luigi Cazzulino, who was reported in May 1934 by the Townsville Vice-Consul L. Chieffi, as being still decidedly against the Regime, but seemingly calming down (*sembra che egli si vada calmando*). ACS/CPC, Cazzulino, Luigi, *b.* 1211, *f.* 64030. On the Meacci case, see ACS/CPC, Meacci, Paolo, *b.* 3194, *f.* 376. Already during the 'Twenties the Consuls hoped that the possibility of quick fortune would dampen the migrants' anti-Fascist zeal. In writing to the Ministry of the Interior on 16 October 1925 about Rina Zaetta, a Communist that in Italy had assisted the Party's underground activities as a silent mail

- box and who purchased a farm in Victoria, Consul-General Grossardi intimated that “now that she too has become a ‘landowner’ (*proprietaria*), her advanced ideas will noticeably calm down as often has been the case in similar circumstances” (ACS/CPC, Zaetta, Rina, *b.* 5490, *f.* 130321).
- 59) ACS/CPC, Bonaguro, Francesco, *b.* 711, *f.* 20924. Also, ACS/CPC, Bonaguro, Girolamo, *b.* 711, *f.* 20362. Also, ACS/CPC, Bonaguro, Giovanni, *b.* 711, *f.* 6323. Also, ACS/CPC, Manera, Giuseppe, *b.* 2979, *f.* 6363. Incidentally, Giovanni Bonaguro’s life as a migrant took an unhappy turn. In January 1929 the Prefect of Vicenza reported to the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* that “he gave in trust his savings, made over many years of work abroad, to his father, also living in Coltrano, who, having squandered for many reasons his son’s savings, and in order to recompense him, at least in part, decided to transfer to him the ownership of part of his land, transfer that, being of old age and father of eight other sons, he wants to execute as soon as possible and in secret, in order to avoid possible negative reactions by his other next-of-kin”.
- 60) ACS/CPC, Canu, Antonio, *b.* 1019, *f.* 95232.
- 61) ACS/CPC, Dalla Valle, Albino, *b.* 1586, *f.* 67034. See also the case of Romeo Guglielmi, a Socialist worker from the Elba Island, classed in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* as dangerous. On 23 March 1930, the Prefect of Livorno was pleased to report to the Ministry of the Interior that in Mourilyan (Qld), Guglielmi “was “obsequious and respectful towards the Consular authorities, and some time ago, at a private function, he even sang with the others the hymn *Giovinezza*” (ACS/CPC, Guglielmi, Romeo, *b.* 2582, *f.* 31001). See also the case of Antonio Giordano, who in 1932 was writing under the pseudonym S. Jordan for the Communist Party paper *Workers’ Weekly*. In January 1938, when Giordano abjured his former ideals and crossed to the Fascist side, his name was taken out of the list of subversives (ACS/CPC, Giordano, Antonio, *b.* 2421, *f.* 110894).
- 62) ACS/CPC, Bianchi, Filippo Maria, *b.* 616, *f.* 38833.
- 63) ACS/CPC, Pompilio, Pasquale, *b.* 4075, *f.* 126442.
- 64) ACS/CPC, Frizza, Domenico, *b.* 2186, *f.* 65384.
- 65) On this, see Gianfranco Cresciani, *Fascism, Anti-Fascism, etc.*, op. cit., pp. 60-63.
- 66) ACS/CPC, Borghetti, Benedetto, *b.* 754, *f.* 27955.
- 67) ACS/CPC, Cappellari, Lorenzito, *b.* 1041, *f.* 2954. On Lanero, see ACS/CPC, Lanero, Pietro, *b.* 2712, *f.* 12387.
- 68) ACS/CPC, Carmignola, Lino, *b.* 1096, *f.* 601.
- 69) On Francesco Giuseppe Carmagnola, see Gianfranco Cresciani, *The Italians in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne 2003, pp. 86-95. Also, Gianfranco Cresciani, *Fascism, Anti-Fascism, etc.*, op.cit., pp. 97-130. Also, Gianfranco Cresciani, ‘Fascism and Italian Anarchists in Australia’, in: *The Australian Quarterly*, op. cit., pp. 4-19.
- 70) ACS/CPC, Carmignola, Giovanni, *b.* 1096, *f.* 390.
- 71) ACS/CPC, Carmignola, Antonia, *b.* 1096, *f.* 389.
- 72) ACS/CPC, Carmignola, Silvio, *b.* 1096, *f.* 600.
- 73) ACS/CPC, De Angelis, Carlo, *b.* 1635, *f.* 73288. Even when they were not “impulsive”, they were still perceived as a threat. On 2 June 1934, Consul-General Ferrante advised the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that, out of two anti-Fascist brothers, “it is my opinion that Luigi Danesi is more dangerous than Costante Danesi, because more cunning, more shrewd; he is hiding his feelings and sometimes pretends to be the defender of Italianness in order to better instil, at the right moment, his anti-Fascist poison” (ACS/CPC, Danesi, Luigi, *b.* 1608, *f.* 118834).

- 74) On Omero Schiassi, see Gianfranco Cresciani, *Fascism, Anti-Fascism, etc.*, op. cit., pp. 223-248. Also, A. R Chisholm, *Men were my Milestones*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1958, pp. 117-125. Also, Gianfranco Cresciani, 'Omero Schiassi in Australia: l'avvocato dei poveri', in: *Studi Emigrazione*, XXXIII, no. 122, June 1996, pp. 304-324.
- 75) ACS/CPC, Caldera, Ciro, b. 945, f. 118046.
- 76) ACS/CPC, Colbertaldo, Luigi, b. 1401, f. 125606.
- 77) ACS/CPC, Ciotti, Giuseppe, b. 1358, f. 11860.
- 78) ACS/CPC, Chemello, Pietro, b. 1263, f. 125568. Also, ACS/CPC, Gavioli, Giuseppe, b. 2319, f. 31045.
- 79) ACS/CPC, Manera, Giuseppe, b. 2979, f. 6363. On the Redentorist Father Giacomo Salza, see Gianfausto Rosoli, *Insieme oltre le frontiere*, Salvatore Sciascia Editore, Rome 1996, pp. 600-623.
- 80) Luigi Einaudi, 'Via il Prefetto!', in: *L'Italia e il secondo Risorgimento*, Supplement to the *Gazzetta Ticinese*, 17 July 1944.
- 81) On the New Fascist Man, see Michael Arthur Ledeen, *Universal Fascism. The Theory and Practice of the Fascist International. 1928-1936*, Howard Fertig, New York 1972, pp. 61-62; 94-95; 151-153; 161-163. Also, Luigi Preti, *Impero fascista, africani ed ebrei*, Mursia, Milano 1968.
- 82) Franzinelli, op. cit., pp. 440-441
- 83) ACS/CPC, Mostacchetti, Giuseppe, b. 3442, f. 117650.
- 84) Aldo Garosci, *Storia dei fuorusciti*, Laterza, Bari 1954, p. 238.
- 85) ACS/CPC, Gemmi, Federico, b. 2328, f. 27598.
- 86) Antonino Repaci, 'Note e discussioni. Una spia del regime', in: *Il Movimento di Liberazione in Italia*, No. 40, January 1956, p. 55.
- 87) *The Spectator*, London, 6 and 13 September 2003. Also, *Corriere della Sera*, Milan, 12 and 15 September 2003.
- 88) Richard Bosworth, *Mussolini*, Arnold, London 2002, p.35.
- 89) Between 1921 and 1926, the number of Italians in France increased from 450,000 to 760,116, and peaked to 808,000 at the beginning of the 'Thirties, only to drop to approximately half at the end of the Second World War. Obviously, the majority of migrants were motivated by economic reasons, however, it has been estimated that not more than 10% were forced to leave Italy by political persecution (Santi Fedele, *Storia della Concentrazione Antifascista 1927-1934*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1976, pp. 6-9.

**TABLE 1**

Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome - Ministero dell'Interno  
Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza - Casellario Politico Centrale  
Italians in Australia screened by the Fascist Government 1922-1940

<b>POLITICAL AFFILIATION</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>
Communist	77
Antifascist	56
Socialist	57
Anarchist	31
Republican	11
Subversive	1
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>233</u></b>

**TABLE 2**

Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome - Ministero dell'Interno  
Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza - Casellario Politico Centrale  
Italians in Australia screened by the Fascist Government 1922-1940

**REGIONAL BIRTHPLACE      NUMBER****NORTHERN ITALY**

Piedmont	31
Lombardy	35
Liguria	3
Veneto	83
Trentino-Alto Adige	2
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	15
Emilia-Romagna	9

**Total      178**

**CENTRAL ITALY**

Tuscany	10
Umbria	1
Marche	6
Lazio	1
Abruzzi-Molise	3

**Total      21**

**SOUTHERN ITALY**

Campania	5
Apulia	13
Basilicata-Lucania	nil
Calabria	2
Sicily	7
Sardinia	4

**Total      31**

TOTAL ITALY      230

REGIONAL BIRTHPLACE NOT AVAILABLE      3

**GRAND TOTAL      233**

**TABLE 3**

Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome - Ministero dell'Interno  
 Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza - Casellario Politico Centrale  
 Italians in Australia screened by the Fascist Government - 1922-1940

<b>PROFESSION</b>	<b>(MESTIERE)</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>
Peasant	Contadino	57
Farm labourer	Bracciante	22
Bricklayer	Muratore	18
Factory Worker	Operaio	11
Farmer	Agricoltore	11
Carpenter	Falegname	10
Miner	Minatore	7
Cobbler	Calzolaio	6
Labourer	Manovale	7
Sailor	Marittimo	6
Textile worker	Tessitore	4
Trader	Commerciante	4
Timberjack	Boscaiolo	3
Carter	Carrettiere	4
Clerk	Impiegato	3
Blacksmith	Fabbro	3
Medical doctor	Medico	3
Fruit grower	Agrumaio	3
Shop keeper	Negoziante	3
Motor mechanic	Meccanico	3
Accountant	Ragioniere	3
Concrete worker	Cementista	2
Hotel keeper	Albergatore	2
Fisherman	Pescatore	2
Tailor	Sarto	3
Waiter	Cameriere	2
Property owner	Possidente	1
Interpreter	Interprete	1
Scribe	Scrivano	1
Casual employee	Commissionario	1
Publisher	Editore	1
Army Lieutenant	Tenente Esercito	1
Sail maker	Velaio	1
Driver	Autista	1
Housewife	Casalinga	1
Barber	Barbiere	1
Railway man	Ferroviero	1
Military Policeman	Carabiniere	1
Electrician	Elettrotecnico	1
Wood cutter	Segantino	1
Baker	Panettiere	1

Gardener	Giardiniere	1
Icecream maker	Gelatiere	1
Lathe operator	Tornitore	1
Book seller	Libraio	1
Boilermaker	Calderaio	1
Goldsmith	Orefice	1
Lawyer	Avvocato	2
Journalist	Giornalista	2
Teacher	Insegnante	1
Student	Studiante	2
Physics graduate	Dottore in Fisica	1
Pensioner	Pensionato	1
Agronomist	Agronomo	1

**TOTAL 233**

## TABLE 4

Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome - Ministero dell'Interno  
Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza - Casellario Politico Centrale  
Italians in Australia screened by the Fascist Government - 1922-1940

### NAMES BY REGION

### NOMINATIVI PER REGIONE

#### PIEDMONT - PIEMONTE (31)

1. Avalor, Michele
2. Betta, Luigi
3. Bonfanti, Carlo
4. Bosazza, Celestino
5. Bosco, Oreste
6. Caldera, Ciro
7. Cazzulino, Luigi
8. Cazzulino, Mario
9. Cazzulino, Paolo
10. Costanzo, Carlo
11. De Andrea, Luigi
12. De Vecchi, Giovanni
13. Ferraris, Bernardo
14. Gatti, Carlo
15. Gatti, Silvio
16. Ghibaud, Giovanni
17. Giacosa, Pietro
18. Governato, Luigi
19. Lanero, Pietro
20. Mametro, Marcello
21. Marco, Felice
22. Marco, Rizieri
23. Migliavacca, Antonio
24. Montagnana, Massimo
25. Mortara, Antonio
26. Paglietta, Giovanni
27. Quartero, Luigi
28. Scagliotti, Vincenzo
29. Spinoglio, Ernesto
30. Strambio, Vito
31. Tibaldi, Giovanni

## **LOMBARDY - LOMBARDIA (35)**

1. Andreoletti, Giovanni
2. Avanzini, Clemente
3. Bonassi, Giuseppe
4. Borghetti, Benedetto
5. Della Maddalena, Fortunato
6. Della Maddalena, Francesco
7. Fanelli, Stefano
8. Farina, Emilio
9. Frizza, Domenico
10. Gavioli, Giuseppe
11. Gilardi, Luigi
12. Giovanelli, Aladino
13. Glisenti, Andrea
14. Guerrini, Antonio
15. Guidi, Abele
16. Maestri, Angelo
17. Maggi, Costantino
18. Magoni, Carlo
19. Mostacchetti, Giuseppe
20. Movigliatti, Giovanni
21. Perani, Giov. Battista
22. Pianeda, Vito
23. Plozza, Stefano
24. Poli, Giovanni
25. Positti, Michele
26. Rebuffoni, Andrea
27. Rebuffoni, Domenico
28. Rebuffoni, Fortunato
29. Rebuffoni, Giovanni
30. Sacristani, Giovanni
31. Tardiani Mario
32. Viganò, Aldo
33. Viganò, Cesare
34. Zilioli, Enrico
35. Zilioli, Giovanni

## **LIGURIA (3)**

1. Maggiani, Umberto
2. Pasquali, Angiolino
3. Reborà, Giov. Battista

## **VENETIA - VENETO (83)**

1. Acquasaliente, Pietro
2. Antico, Giovanni Terribile
3. Antico, Giuseppe
4. Antico, Luigi
5. Badesso, Giuseppe
6. Baratto, Ernesto
7. Basso, Gottardo
8. Bentivoglio, Ferdinando
9. Berlato, Primo
10. Bertazzon, Isidoro
11. Boito, Antonio
12. Bonaguro, Francesco
13. Bonaguro, Giovanni
14. Bonaguro, Girolamo
15. Cadonà, Leandro
16. Campanaro, Francesco
17. Canil, Pietro
18. Canteri, Guido
19. Carmagnola, Francesco Giuseppe
20. Carmignola, Antonia
21. Carmignola, Giovanni
22. Carmignola, Lino
23. Carmignola, Silvio
24. Cavasin, Carlo
25. Chemello, Pietro
26. Cielo, Eliseo
27. Ciotti, Giuseppe
28. Ciotti, Valentino
29. Colbertaldo, Luigi
30. Colladetti, Angelo
31. Corso, Giovanni
32. Cunial, Angelo fu Giovanni
33. Cunial, Angelo fu Quirino
34. Cunial, Antonio
35. Cunial, Giovanni
36. Cunial, Pietro
37. Da Cortà, Mirko
38. Dalla Costa, Guerrino
39. Dalla Valle, Albino
40. Dalle Nogare, Modesto
41. Dal Santo, Silvio
42. Da Vanzo, Pietro
43. De Bernardo, Andrea
44. De Biasio, Giuseppe
45. De Candido, Giovanni
46. De Meio, Gelmiro
47. De Meio, Orazio

48. Epifanio, Giovanni
49. Fantin, Francesco
50. Feltrin, Antonio
51. Festini, Furlan
52. Forner, Antonio
53. Fratin, Pietro
54. Furlan, Sebastiano
55. Girardini, Antonio
56. Grotto, Pietro
57. Lesana, Giuseppe
58. Manera, Emanuele
59. Manera, Giuseppe fu Giovanni
60. Martin, Andrea
61. Mendo, Giovanni
62. Panizzon, Gaetano
63. Pastega, Angelo
64. Pastega, Giacomo
65. Perin, Claudio
66. Pilloni, Fulvio
67. Pinazza, Francesco
68. Precoma, Antonio
69. Precoma Gioacchino
70. Precoma, Mario
71. Predebon, Ernesto
72. Saccardo, Giovanni
73. Salvestro, Giuseppe
74. Sarri, Carlo
75. Saviane, Tommaso
76. Savio, Pietro
77. Scodro, Giovanni
78. Socal, Giuseppe
79. Socal, Graziadio
80. Stedile, Severino
81. Torresan, Calogero
82. Visonà, Giovanni
83. Zaetta, Rina

## **TRENTINO-ALTO ADIGE (2)**

1. Brida, Ottavio
2. Pellizzari, Cornelio

### **FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA (15)**

1. Cappellari, Lorenzito
2. De Luca, Cesare
3. Hojak, Cirillo
4. Lonzar, Giovanni
5. Martin, Antonio
6. Mecchia, Giobatta
7. Noselli, Angelo
8. Palman, Cento
9. Palman, Savoino
10. Percich, Antonio
11. Revelant, Alfredo
12. Revelant, Giorgio
13. Simeoni, Carlo
14. Solari, Giuseppe
15. Volpe, Passatea

### **EMILIA-ROMAGNA (9)**

1. Bertoni, Enrico
2. Fantini, Carlo
3. Giovanardi, Giuseppe
4. Giovanardi, Secondo
5. Magi, Giuseppe
6. Prampolini, Giuseppe
7. Rossi, Pietro
8. Santi, Giulio
9. Schiassi, Omero

### **TUSCANY - TOSCANA (10)**

1. Argenti, Giacomo
2. Cardenti, Giuseppe
3. Carucci, Giulio
4. Castelli, Achille
5. Danesi, Costante
6. Danesi, Luigi
7. De Angelis, Carlo
8. Gemmi, Federico
9. Guglielmi, Romeo
10. Meacci, Paolo

## **UMBRIA (1)**

1. Sebastiani, Pietro

## **MARCHE (6)**

1. Bianchi, Filippo Maria
2. Capriotti, Vincenzo
3. Carlini, Enrico
4. De Marco, Divo
5. Ficcadenti, Vincenzo
6. Nibbi, Gino

## **LATIUM - LAZIO (1)**

1. Carpigo, Giuseppe

## **ABRUZZI-MOLISE (3)**

1. Gigante, Cesare
2. Petrilli, Amico
3. Pieragostino, Luigi

## **CAMPANIA (5)**

1. Auricchio, Mario
2. De Luca, Pietro
3. Di Tocco, Rosario
4. Gargiulo, Francesco
5. Giordano, Antonio

## **APULIA - PUGLIA (13)**

1. Altomare, Leonardo
2. Battista, Nicola
3. Cammerino, Pietro
4. Del Campo, Matteo
5. Giuliani, Antonio
6. Leggieri, Nazzario
7. Limosani, Michele
8. Locurcio, Giovanni
9. Matera, Antonio
10. Rana, Pantaleo
11. Soccio, Angelo
12. Stilla, Pasquale
13. Villani, Gioacchino

## **CALABRIA (2)**

1. Chiarella, Giuseppe
2. Pompilio, Pasquale

## **SICILY - SICILIA (7)**

1. Amendola, Francesco
2. Arico, Carmelo
3. Calì, Rosario
4. Certoso, Gaetano
5. Ioppolo, Michele
6. Riggio, Vito
7. Sceusa, Francesco

## **SARDINIA - SARDEGNA (4)**

1. Camba, Avendrace
2. Canu, Antonio
3. Cusinu, Antonio
4. Salis, Giovanni

## **REGIONAL BIRTHPLACE NOT AVAILABLE (3)**

1. Del Favero, Giuseppe
2. Giannitrapani, Alberto
3. Muratori, Guido

**GRAND TOTAL                    233**

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