Operation Gladio

Gladio (Italian for Gladius, the sword) is a code name denoting the clandestine NATO "stay-behind" operation in Italy after World War II, intended to continue anti-communist actions in the event of a Warsaw Pact invasion of Western Europe. Although Gladio specifically refers to the Italian branch of the NATO stay-behind organisations, "Operation Gladio" is used as an informal name for all stay-behind organisations, sometimes called "Super NATO".\[1\]

Operating in many NATO and even some neutral countries,\[2\] Gladio was part of a series of national operations first coordinated by the Clandestine Committee of the Western Union (CCWU), founded in 1948. After the creation of NATO in 1949, the CCWU was integrated into the Clandestine Planning Committee (CPC), founded in 1951 and overseen by SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers, Europe), transferred to Belgium after France's official withdrawal from NATO's Military Committee in 1966 — which was not followed by the dissolution of the French stay-behind paramilitary movements.

The role of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in sponsoring Gladio and the extent of its activities during the Cold War era, and its relationship to right-wing terrorist attacks perpetrated in Italy during the Years of Lead and other similar clandestine operations is the subject of ongoing debate and investigation. Italy, Switzerland and Belgium have had parliamentary inquiries into the matter.\[3\]

Origins

The origin of Gladio can be traced to the so-called "secret anti-Communist NATO protocols", which were allegedly protocols committing the secret services of NATO member states to work to prevent Communist parties from coming to power in Western Europe. According to the Italian researcher Mario Coglitore, the protocols required member states to guarantee alignment with the Western block "by any means". According to a US journalist Arthur Rowse, a secret clause exists in the North Atlantic Treaty requiring candidate countries, before joining NATO, to establish clandestine citizen cadres standing ready to eliminate communist cells during any national emergency. These clandestine cadres were to be controlled by the country's respective security services.\[4\]

General stay-behind structure

After World War II, the UK and the US decided to create "stay-behind" paramilitary organizations, with the official aim of countering a possible Soviet invasion through sabotage and guerrilla warfare behind enemy lines. Arms caches were hidden, escape routes prepared, and loyal members recruited: i.e., mainly hardline anticommunists, including many ex-Nazis or former fascists, whether in Italy or in other European countries. In Germany, for example, Gladio had as a central focus the Gehlen Org — also involved in ODESSA "ratlines" — named after Reinhard Gehlen who would become West Germany's first head of intelligence, while the predominantly Italian P2 masonic
lodge was composed of many members of the neofascist Italian Social Movement (MSI), including Licio Gelli. Its clandestine "cells" were to stay behind (hence the name) in enemy controlled territory and to act as resistance movements, conducting sabotage, guerrilla warfare and assassinations.

However, Italian Gladio was more far reaching. "A briefing minute of June 1, 1959, reveals Gladio was built around 'internal subversion'. It was to play 'a determining role... not only on the general policy level of warfare, but also in the politics of emergency'. In the 1970s, with communist electoral support growing and other leftists looking menacing, the establishment turned to the 'Strategy of Tension' ... with Gladio eager to be involved."[5]

CIA director Allen Dulles was one of the key people in instituting Operation Gladio, and most of Gladio’s operations were financed by the CIA. The anti-communist networks, which were present in all of Europe, including in neutral countries like Sweden and Switzerland, were partly funded by the CIA.[6] Some went as far as claiming that Democrazia Cristiana leader Aldo Moro had been the "founder of (Italian) Gladio".[7] However, whether these allegations are correct or not, his murder in 1978 put an end to the "historic compromise" (sharing of power) attempt between the PCI and the Christian Democrats (DC), thus accomplishing one of the alleged objectives of the strategy of tension.

Operating in all of NATO and even in some neutral countries such as Spain before its 1982 admission to NATO, Gladio was first coordinated by the Clandestine Committee of the Western Union (CCWU), founded in 1948. After the creation of NATO in 1949, the CCWU was integrated into the "Clandestine Planning Committee" (CPC), founded in 1951 and overseen by the SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe), transferred to Belgium after France's official retreat from NATO — which was not followed by the dissolution of the French stay-behind paramilitary movements.

Ganser alleges that:[4]

Next to the CPC, a second secret army command center, labeled Allied Clandestine Committee (ACC), was set up in 1957 on the orders of NATO's Supreme Allied Commander in Europe (SACEUR). This military structure provided for significant US leverage over the secret stay-behind networks in Western Europe as the SACEUR, throughout NATO's history, has traditionally been a US General who reports to the Pentagon in Washington and is based in NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium. The ACC's duties included elaborating on the directives of the network, developing its clandestine capability, and organizing bases in Britain and the United States. In wartime, it was to plan stay-behind operations in conjunction with SHAPE. According to former CIA director William Colby, it was 'a major program'.

Coordinated by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), {the secret armies} were run by the European military secret services in close cooperation with the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the British foreign secret service Secret Intelligence Service (SIS, also MI6). Trained together with US Green Berets and British Special Air Service (SAS), these clandestine NATO soldiers, armed with underground arms-caches, prepared against a potential Soviet invasion and occupation of Western Europe, as well as the coming to power of communist parties. The clandestine international network covered the European NATO membership, including Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, and Turkey, as well as the neutral European countries of Austria, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland.

The existence of these clandestine NATO armies remained a closely guarded secret throughout the Cold War until 1990, when the first branch of the international network was discovered in Italy. It was code-named Gladio, the Latin word for a short double-edged sword [gladius]. While the press said that the NATO secret armies were 'the best-kept, and most damaging, political-military secret since World War II', the Italian government, amidst sharp public criticism, promised to close down the secret army. Italy insisted identical clandestine armies had also existed in all other countries of Western Europe. This allegation proved correct and subsequent research found that in Belgium, the secret NATO army was...
code-named SDRA8, in Denmark Absalon, in Germany TD BJD, in Greece LOK, in Luxemburg Stay-Behind, in the Netherlands I&O, in Norway ROC, in Portugal Aginter, in Switzerland P26, in Turkey Ozel Harp Dairesi, In Sweden AGAG (Aktions Gruppen Arla Gryning, and in Austria OWSGV. However, the code names of the secret armies in France, Finland and Spain remain unknown.

Upon learning of the discovery, the parliament of the European Union (EU) drafted a resolution sharply criticizing the fact (...) Yet only Italy, Belgium and Switzerland carried out parliamentary investigations, while the administration of President George H. W. Bush refused to comment, being in the midst of preparations for war against Saddam Hussein in the Persian Gulf, and fearing potential damages to the military alliance.

If Gladio was effectively "the best-kept, and most damaging, political-military secret since World War II", it must be underlined, however, that on several occasions, arms caches were discovered and stay-behind paramilitary organizations officially dissolved – only to be created again. But it was not until the 1990s that the full international scope of the program was disclosed to public knowledge. Giulio Andreotti, the main character of Italy's post-World War II political life, was described by Aldo Moro to his captors as "too close to NATO", Moro thus advising them to be wary. Indeed, before Andreotti’s 1990 acknowledgement of Gladio’s existence, he had "unequivocally" denied it in 1974, and then in 1978 to judges investigating the 1969 Piazza Fontana bombing. And even in 1990, "Testimonies collected by the two men [judges Felice Casson and Carlo Mastelloni investigating the 1972 Peteano fascist car bomb] and by the Commission on Terrorism on Rome, and inquiries by the Guardian, indicate that Gladio was involved in activities which do not square with Andreotti's account. Links between Gladio, Italian secret services bosses and the notorious P2 masonic lodge are manifold (...) In the year that Andreotti denied Gladio's existence, the P2 treasurer, General Siro Rosetti, gave a generous account of 'a secret security structure made up of civilians, parallel to the armed forces' There are also overlaps between senior Gladio personnel and the committee of military men, Rosa dei Venti (Wind Rose), which tried to stage a coup in 1970."

European Parliament resolution concerning Gladio

On November 22, 1990, the European Parliament passed a resolution condemning Gladio, requesting full investigations – which have yet to be done – and total dismantlement of these paramilitary structures. In 2005, the first academic examination of Gladio was published by Swiss historian Daniele Ganser. Mr. Ganser, as of 2010, is a Senior Researcher at the Center for Security Studies at the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, Switzerland. His book, NATO's Secret Armies: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe, is a documented study of how Gladio operated.

British journalist Philip Willan, who by 2010 writes for the UK Guardian and UK Observer, is the author of the book Puppetmasters: The Political Use of Terrorism in Italy, describing how US intelligence services relationship with a masonic lodge used to prop up Christian Democrat governments, undermining the growing political influence of the Italian Communist Party.

The 1990 European resolution condemned "the existence for 40 years of a clandestine parallel intelligence" as well as "armed operations organization in several Member States of the Community", which "escaped all democratic controls and has been run by the secret services of the states concerned in collaboration with NATO." Denouncing the "danger that such clandestine network may have interfered illegally in the internal political affairs of Member States or may still do so," especially before the fact that "in certain Member States military secret services (or uncontrolled branches thereof) were involved in serious cases of terrorism and crime," the Parliament demanded a "a full investigation into the nature, structure, aims and all other aspects of these clandestine organizations or any splinter groups, their use for illegal interference in the internal political affairs of the countries concerned, the problem of terrorism in Europe and the possible collusion of the secret services of Member States or third countries.” Furthermore, the resolution protested "vigorously at the assumption by certain US military personnel at SHAPE and in NATO of the right to encourage the establishment in Europe of a clandestine intelligence and operation network,"
asking "the Member States to dismantle all clandestine military and paramilitary networks" and to "draw up a complete list of organizations active in this field, and at the same time to monitor their links with the respective state intelligence services and their links, if any, with terrorist action groups and/or other illegal practices." Finally, the Parliament called "on its competent committee to consider holding a hearing in order to clarify the role and impact of the 'Gladio' organization and any similar bodies," and instructed "its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the Secretary-General of NATO, the governments of the Member States and the United States Government."

**Allegations**

The first academic examination of Gladio was published in 2005 by Swiss historian Daniele Ganser. Mr. Ganser is currently a Senior Researcher at the Center for Security Studies at the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, Switzerland. His book, NATO's Secret Armies: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe, Gladio has been accused of trying to influence policies through the means of "false flag" operations: a 2000 Italian Parliamentary Commission report from the Olive Tree left-wing coalition concluded that the strategy of tension used by Gladio had been supported by the United States to "stop the PCI (Italian Communist Party), and to a certain degree also the PSI (Italian Socialist Party), from reaching executive power in the country".

Propaganda Due (also known as P2), a quasi-freemasonic organization, whose existence was discovered in 1981, was said closely linked to Gladio.

P2 was outlawed and disbanded in 1981, in the wake of the Banco Ambrosiano scandal, which was linked to the Mafia and to the Vatican Bank. Its Grand Master, Licio Gelli, was involved in most of Italy’s scandals in the last three decades of the 20th century: Banco Ambrosiano's crash; *Tangentopoli*, which gave rise to the *Mani pulite* ("Clean hands") anticorruption operation in the 1990s; the kidnapping and the murder of Prime Minister Aldo Moro in 1978 – the head of the secret services at the time, accused of negligence, was a *piduista* (P2 member). Licio Gelli has often said he was a friend of Argentine President Juan Perón. In any case, some important figures of his circle were discovered to be piduista, such as José López Rega, founder of the infamous anticommunist organization *Triple A* and provisional president Raúl Alberto Lastiri. Some members of later Jorge Videla’s dictatorship were part of the P2 too, such as Admiral Emilio Massera and General Guillermo Suárez Mason. The Vatican Bank was also accused of funneling covert US funds for the Solidarność trade union movement in Poland and the Contras in Nicaragua.[9]

Furthermore, Gladio has been linked to other events, such as Operation Condor[10] and the 1969 killing of anticolonialist/independentist Mozambican leader Eduardo Mondlane by *Aginter Press*, the Portuguese "stay-behind" secret army, headed by Yves Guérin-Sérac - the allegation on Mondlane's death is disputed, with several sources stating that FRELIMO guerrilla leader Eduardo Mondlane was killed in a struggle for power within FRELIMO. In 1995, Attorney General Giovanni Salvi accused the Italian secret services of having manipulated proofs of the Chilean secret police’s (DINA) involvement in the 1975 terrorist attack on former Chilean Vice-President Bernardo Leighton in Rome. A similar mode of operation can also be recognized in various Cold War events, for example between the June 20, 1973 Ezeiza massacre in Buenos Aires (Argentina), the 1976 Montejurra massacre in Spain and the 1977 Taksim Square massacre in Istanbul (Turkey).

After Giulio Andreotti’s revelations and the disestablishment of Gladio, the last meeting of the "Allied Clandestine Committee" (ACC), was held according to the Italian Prime minister on October 23 and 24, 1990. Despite this, various events have raised concerns about "stay-behind" armies still being in place. In 1996, the Belgian newspaper *Le Soir* revealed the existence of a racist plan operated by the military intelligence agencies. In 1999, Switzerland was suspected of again creating a clandestine paramilitary structure, allegedly to replace the former P26 and P27 (the Swiss branches of Gladio). Furthermore, in 2005, the Italian press revealed the existence of the Department of Anti-terrorism Strategic Studies (DSSA), accused of being "another Gladio".
**Gladio's strategy of tension and internal subversion operations**

NATO's "stay-behind" organizations were never called upon to resist a Soviet invasion, but their structures continued to exist after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Internal subversion and "false flag" operations were explicitly considered by the CIA and stay-behind paramilitaries. According to a November 13, 1990 Reuters cable, "André Moyen – a former member of the Belgian military security service and of the [stay-behind] network – said Gladio was not just anti-Communist but was for fighting subversion in general. He added that his predecessor had given Gladio 142 million francs ($4.6 millions) to buy new radio equipment."[11] Ganser alleges that on various occasions, stay-behind movements became linked to right-wing terrorism, crime and attempted coups d'état.[4]

"Prudent Precaution or Source of Terror?" the international press pointedly asked when the secret stay-behind armies of NATO were discovered across Western Europe in late 1990. After more than ten years of research, the answer is now clear: both. The overview above shows that based on the experiences of World War II, all countries of Western Europe, with the support of NATO, the CIA, and MI6, had set up stay-behind armies as precaution against a potential Soviet invasion. While the safety networks and the integrity of the majority of the secret soldiers should not be criticized in hindsight after the collapse of the Soviet Union, very disturbing questions do arise with respect to reported links to terrorism.

There exist large differences among the European countries, and each case must be analyzed individually in further detail. As of now, the evidence suggests the secret armies in the seven countries, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Luxemburg, Switzerland, Austria, and the Netherlands, focused exclusively on their stay-behind function and were not linked to terrorism. However, links to terrorism have been either confirmed or claimed in the nine countries, Italy, Ireland, Turkey, Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, and Sweden, demanding further investigation.

According to Daniele Ganser, only Italy, Belgium and Switzerland carried on parliamentary investigations, while the prosecution of various "black terrorists" (terrorismo nero, neofascist terrorism) in Italy was difficult.

A 1990 article from *The Guardian* featured the following quote from judge Libero Mancuso:[13]

On the eve of the 1980 Bologna bombing anniversary, Liberato [sic] Mancuso, the Bologna judge who had led the investigation and secured the initial convictions [of the Bologna bombers] broke six months of silence: "It is now understood among those engaged in the matter of democratic rights that we are isolated, and the objects of a campaign of aggression. This is what has happened to the commission into the P2, and to the magistrates. The personal risks to us are small in comparison to this offensive of denigration, which attempts to discredit the quest for truth. In Italy there has functioned for some years now a sort of conditioning, a control of our national sovereignty by the P2 – which was literally the master of the secret services, the army and our most delicate organs of state."

Examples of such alleged terrorist acts include the strategy of tension in Italy, or the Oktoberfest bomb blast of 1980 in Munich. A Gladio official said that "depending on the cases, we would block or encourage far-left or far-right terrorism".[14] [15]

**Gladio operations in NATO countries**

**First discovered in Italy**

The Italian NATO stay-behind organization, dubbed "Gladio", was set up under Minister of Defense (from 1953 to 1958) Paolo Taviani's (DC) supervision.[16] However, Gladio's existence came to public knowledge when Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti revealed it to the Chamber of Deputies on October 24, 1990, although far-right terrorist Vincenzo Vinciguerra had already revealed its existence during his 1984 trial. According to media analyst Edward S.
Herman, "both the President of Italy, Francesco Cossiga, and Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, had been involved in the Gladio organization and coverup..."[17]

**Giulio Andreotti's October 24, 1990 revelations**

Prime minister Giulio Andreotti (member of the Christian Democracy, DC) publicly recognized the existence of Gladio on October 24, 1990. Andreotti spoke of a "structure of information, response and safeguard", with arms caches and reserve officers. He gave to the Commissione Stragi, the parliamentary commission led by senator Giovanni Pellegrino in charge of investigations on bombings committed during the Years Of Lead in Italy, a list of 622 civilians who according to him were part of Gladio. Andreotti also assured that 127 weapons' cache had been dismantled, and pretended that Gladio had not been involved in any of the bombings committed from the 1960s to the 1980s (further evidence implicated neofascists linked to Gladio, in particular concerning the 1969 Piazza Fontana bombing, the 1972 Peteano attack by Vincenzo Vinciguerra, the 1980 Bologna massacre in which SISMI officers were condemned for investigation diversion, along with Licio Gelli, head of Propaganda Due masonic lodge, etc.).

Andreotti declared that the Italian military services (predecessors of the SISMI) had joined in 1964 the Allied Clandestine Committee created in 1957 by the US, France, Belgium and Greece, and which was in charge of directing Gladio's operations.[18] However, Gladio was actually set up under Minister of Defense (from 1953 to 1958) Paolo Taviani's supervision.[16] Beside, the list of Gladio members given by Andreotti was incomplete. It didn't include, for example, Antonio Arconte, who described an organization very different from the one brushed by Giulio Andreotti: an organization closely tied to the SID secret service and the Atlantist strategy.[19] [20] According to Andreotti, the stay-behind organisations set up in all of Europe did not come "under broad NATO supervision until 1959."[21]

**2000 Parliamentary report: a "strategy of tension"**

In 2000, a Parliament Commission report from the "Gruppo Democratici di Sinistra l'Ulivo" concluded that the strategy of tension had been supported by the United States to "stop the PCI, and to a certain degree also the PSI, from reaching executive power in the country". A 2000 Senate report, stated that "Those massacres, those bombs, those military actions had been organized or promoted or supported by men inside Italian state institutions and, as has been discovered more recently, by men linked to the structures of United States intelligence." According to The Guardian, "The report [claimed] that US intelligence agents were informed in advance about several rightwing terrorist bombings, including the December 1969 Piazza Fontana bombing in Milan and the Piazza della Loggia bombing in Brescia five years later, but did nothing to alert the Italian authorities or to prevent the attacks from taking place. It also [alleged] that Pino Rauti [current leader of the MSI Fiamma-Tricolore party], a journalist and founder of the far-right Ordine Nuovo (new order) subversive organisation, received regular funding from a press officer at the US embassy in Rome. 'So even before the 'stabilising' plans that Atlantic circles had prepared for Italy became operational through the bombings, one of the leading members of the subversive right was literally in the pay of the American embassy in Rome,' the report says."[22]

**General Maletti's testimony concerning alleged CIA involvement**

General Gianadelio Maletti, commander of the counter-intelligence section of the Italian military intelligence service from 1971 to 1975, alleged in March 2001 during the eight trial for the 1969 Piazza Fontana bombings that the CIA had foreknowledge of the event.[23] According to the Guardian, he said:[24]

...his men had discovered that a rightwing terrorist cell in the Venice region had been supplied with military explosives from Germany. Those explosives may have been obtained with the help of members of the US intelligence community, an indication that the Americans had gone beyond the infiltration and monitoring of extremist groups to instigating acts of violence...

General Maletti told the Italian court that "the CIA, following the directives of its government, wanted to create an Italian nationalism capable of halting what it saw as a slide to the left and, for this purpose, it may have made use of
Operation Gladio

rightwing terrorism," and continued on by declaring: "I believe this is what happened in other countries as well."
Gianadelio Maletti also said to the court: "Don't forget that Nixon was in charge and Nixon was a strange man, a very intelligent politician but a man of rather unorthodox initiatives."

General Maletti himself in the first Piazza Fontana trial received a four year sentence for providing a false passport to one of the accused bombers, this sentence was overturned in 1985. Maletti received, while in exile, a 15-years sentence in 2000 for his role in trying to cover up a 1973 bomb attack in Milan against the Interior minister, Mariano Rumor (DC - 4 killed and 45 injured), but was acquitted on appeals. According to the court, General Maletti knew in advance of the plan of the attacker, Gianfranco Bertoli, allegedly an anarchist but in reality a right-wing activist and a "long-standing SID informant" according to The Guardian, but had deliberately failed to inform the interior minister of it.

Responding to charges made by Maletti in La Repubblica one year earlier, the CIA called the allegation that it was involved in the attacks in Italy "ludicrous."

A quick chronology of Italy's "strategy of tension"

- **1964 Piano Solo**
  In 1964, Gladio was involved in a silent coup d'état when General Giovanni de Lorenzo in the so-called Piano Solo ("Operation Alone") forced the Italian Socialists Ministers to leave the government.

- **1969 Piazza Fontana bombing**
  According to Avanguardia Nazionale member Vincenzo Vinciguerra: "The December 1969 explosion was supposed to be the detonator which would have convinced the politic and military authorities to declare a state of emergency."[29]

- **1970 Golpe Borghese**
  In 1970, the failed coup attempt Golpe Borghese gathered, around fascist Junio Valerio Borghese, international terrorist Stefano Delle Chiaie and P2 grand master Licio Gelli.

- **1972 Gladio meeting**
  According to The Guardian, "General Geraldo Serravalle, a former head of "Office R", told the terrorism commission that at a crucial Gladio meeting in 1972, at least half of the upper echelons "had the idea of attacking the communists before an invasion. They were preparing for civil war." Later, he put it more bluntly: "They were saying this: "Why wait for the invaders when we can make a preemptive attack now on the communists who would support the invader? The idea is now emerging of a Gladio web made up of semi-autonomous cadres which – although answerable to their secret service masters and ultimately to the NATO-CIA command – could initiate what they regarded as anti-communist operations by themselves, needing only sanction and funds from the existing 'official' Gladio column (...) General Nino Lugarese, head of SISMI from 1981-84 testified on the existence of a 'Super Gladio' of 800 men responsible for 'internal intervention' against domestic political targets."[5]

- **May 31, 1972 Peteano massacre**
  Magistrate Felice Casson discovered that "the explosives used in the attack came from one of 139 secret weapons depots of a secret army organized under the code name Operation Gladio". Neofascist Vincenzo Vinciguerra confessed in 1984 to judge Felice Casson of having carried out the Peteano terrorist attack, in which three policemen died, and for which the Red Brigades (BR) had been blamed before. Vinciguerra explained during his trial how he had been helped by Italian secret services to escape the police and to fly away to Francoist Spain. However, he was abandoned by NATO as soon as he started talking about Gladio, declaring for example during his 1984 trial:

  "with the massacre of Peteano and with all those that have followed, the knowledge should now be clear that there existed a real live structure, occult and hidden, with the capacity of giving a strategic direction to the
outrages. [This structure] lies within the states itself. There exists in Italy a secret force parallel to the armed forces, composed of civilians and military men, in an anti-Soviet capacity, that is, to organise a resistance on Italian soil against a Russian army... A super-organization which, lacking a Soviet military invasion which might not happen, took up the task, on NATO's behalf, of preventing a slip to the left in the political balance of the country. This they did, with the assistance of the official secret services and the political and military forces..." He then said to The Guardian, in 1990: "I say that every single outrage that followed from 1969 fitted into a single, organised matrix... Avanguardia Nazionale, like Ordine Nuovo (the main right-wing terrorist group active during the 1970s), were being mobilised into the battle as part of an anti-communist strategy originating not with organisations deviant from the institutions of power, but from within the state itself, and specifically from within the ambit of the state's relations within the Atlantic Alliance.⁴[²]⁵

- **November 23, 1973 Bombing of the plane Argo 16**
  General Geraldo Serravalle, head of Gladio from 1971 to 1974, told a television programme that he now thought the explosion aboard the plane Argo 16 on 23 November 1973 was probably the work of gladiatori who were refusing to hand over their clandestine arms. Until then it was widely believed the sabotage was carried out by Mossad, the Israeli foreign service, in retaliation for the pro-Libyan Italian government's decision to expel, rather than try, five Arabs who had tried to blow up an Israeli airliner. The Arabs had been spirited out of the country on board the Argo 16.³⁰

- **1974 Piazza della Loggia bombing, Italicus Express massacre, and arrest of Vito Miceli, chief of the Army intelligence service and member of P2, on charges of "conspiracy against the state"**
  In 1974, a massacre committed by Ordine Nuovo, during an anti-fascist demonstration in Brescia, kills eight and injures 102. The same year, a bomb in the Rome to Munich train "Italics Express" kills 12 and injures 48. Also in 1974, Vito Miceli, P2 member, chief of the SIOS (Servizio Informazioni), Army Intelligence's Service from 1969 and SID's head from 1970 to 1974, got arrested on charges of "conspiracy against the state" concerning investigations about Rosa dei venti, a state-infiltrated group involved in terrorist acts. During his trial, he revealed the existence of the NATO stay-behind secret army.

- **1977 Reorganization of Italian secret services following Vito Miceli's arrest**
  In 1977, the secret services were thus reorganized in a democratic attempt. With law#801 of 24/10/1977, SID was divided into SISMI (Servizio per le Informazioni e la Sicurezza Militare), SISDE (Servizio per le Informazioni e la Sicurezza Democratica) and CESIS (Comitato Esecutivo per i Servizi di Informazione e Sicurezza). The CESIS was given a coordination role, led by the President of Council.

- **1978 Murder of Aldo Moro**
  Prime minister Aldo Moro was murdered in May 1978 by the Second Red Brigades (BR), headed by Mario Moretti, in obscure circumstances. The head of the Italian secret services, accused of negligence, was a P2 member. The so-called "historic compromise" between the Christian-Democracy and the PCI was abandoned.³¹ The Italian Government led by Prime Minister Francesco Cossiga (a member of the extreme right faction of Italy's Christian Democrat party, a pro-NATO atlantist was also suspected of involvement in the killing of Aldo Moro).

"As the conspiracy theorists would have it, Mr. Moro was allowed to be killed either with the acquiescence of people high in Italy's political establishment, or at their instigation, because of the historic compromise he had made with the Communist Party"

"During his captivity, Aldo Moro wrote several letters to various political figures, including Giulio Andreotti. In October 1990, "a cache of previously unknown letters written by the former Prime Minister, Aldo Moro, just prior to his execution by Red Brigade terrorists in 1978... was discovered in a Milan apartment which had once been used as a Red Brigade hideout. One of those letters made reference to the involvement of both NATO and the CIA in an Italian-based secret service, 'parallel' army."³² "This safe house had been
thoroughly searched at the time by Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa, the head of counter-terrorism. How is it that the papers had not been revealed before?” asked The Independent.[31] Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa was murdered in 1982 (see below).

In May 1978, investigative journalist Mino Pecorelli thought that Aldo Moro's kidnapping had been organised by a "lucid superpower" and was inspired by the "logic of Yalta". He painted the figure of General Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa as "general Amen," explaining that it was him that, during Aldo Moro's kidnap, had informed Interior Minister Francesco Cossiga of the localization of the cave where Moro was detained. In 1978, Pecorelli wrote that Dalla Chiesa was in danger and would be assassinated (Dalla Chiesa was murdered four years later). After Aldo Moro's assassination, Mino Pecorelli published some confidential documents, mainly Moro's letters to his family. In a cryptic article published in May 1978, wrote The Guardian in May 2003, Pecorelli drew a connection between Gladio, NATO's stay-behind anti-communist organisation (which existence was publicly acknowledged by Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti in October 1990) and Moro's death. During his interrogation, Aldo Moro had referred to "NATO's anti-guerrilla activities."[33] Mino Pecorelli, who was on Licio Gelli's list of P2 members discovered in 1980, was assassinated on March 20, 1979. The ammunitions used, a very rare type, where the same as discovered in the Banda della Magliana's weapons stock hidden in the Health Minister's basement. Pecorelli's assassination has been thought to be directly related to Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, who was condemned to 20 years of prison for it in 2002 before having the sentence cancelled by the Supreme Court of Cassation in 2003.

• 1980 Bologna massacre

"The makings of the bomb... came from an arsenal used by Gladio... according to a parliamentary commission on terrorism... The suggested link with the Bologna massacre is potentially the most serious of all the accusations levelled against Gladio, and comes just two days after the Italian Prime Minister, Giulio Andreotti, cleared Gladio's name in a speech to parliament, saying that the secret army did not drift from its formal Nato military brief."[34] In November 1995, Neo-Fascists terrorists Valerio Floravanti and Francesca Mambro, members of the Nuclei Armati Revolucionari (NAR), were convicted to life imprisonment as executors of the 1980 Bologna massacre. The NAR neofascist group worked in cooperation with the Banda della Magliana, a Mafia-linked gang which took over Rome's underground in the 1970s and was involved in various political events of the strategy of tension, including the Aldo Moro case, the 1979 assassination of Mino Pecorelli, a journalist who published articles alleging links between Prime minister Giulio Andreotti and the mafia, as well as the assassination of "God's Banker" Roberto Calvi in 1982. The investigations concerning the Bologna bombing proved Gladio's direct influence: Licio Gelli, P2's headmaster, received a sentence for investigation diversion, as well as Francesco Pazienza and SISMI officers Pietro Musumeci and Giuseppe Belmonte. Avanguardia Nazionale founder Stefano Delle Chiaie, who was involved in the Golpe Borghese in 1970, was also accused of involvement in the Bologna massacre[15][35]

• 1982 murder of General Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa, head of counter-terrorism.

General Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa's 1982 murder, in Palermo, by Pino Greco, one of the Mafia Godfather Salvatore Riina's (aka Toto Riina) favorite hitmen, is allegedly part of the strategy of tension. Alberto Dalla Chiesa had arrested Red Brigades founders Renato Curcio and Alberto Franceschini in September, 1974, and was later charged of investigation concerning Aldo Moro. He had also found Aldo Moro's letters concerning Gladio.

• October 24, 1990 Giulio Andreotti's acknowledgement of Operazione Gladio

After the discovery by judge Felice Casson of documents on Gladio in the archives of the Italian military secret service in Rome, Giulio Andreotti, head of Italian government, revealed to the Chamber of deputies the existence of "Operazione Gladio" on October 24, 1990, insisting that Italy has not been the only country with secret "stay-behind" armies. He made clear that "each chief of government had been informed of the existence of Gladio". Former Socialist Prime Minister Bettino Craxi said that he had not been informed until he was confronted with a document on Gladio signed by himself while he was Prime Minister. Former Prime Minister
Giovanni Spadolini (Republican Party), at the time President of the Senate, and former Prime Minister Arnaldo Forlani, at the time secretary of the ruling Christian Democratic Party claimed they remembered nothing. Spadolini stressed that there was a difference between what he knew as former Defence Secretary and what he knew as former Prime Minister. Only former Prime Minister Francesco Cossiga (DC) confirmed Andreotti’s revelations, explaining that he was even “proud and happy” for his part in setting up Gladio as junior Defence Minister of the Christian Democratic Party. This lit up a political storm, requests were made for Cossiga’s (Italian President since 1985) resignation or impeachment for high treason. He refused to testify to the investigating Senate committee. Cossiga narrowly escaped his impeachment by stepping down on April 1992, three months before his term expired.[36]

• 1998 David Carrett, officer of the U.S. Navy

David Carrett, officer of the U.S. Navy, was indicted by magistrate Guido Salvini on charge of political and military espionage and his participation to the 1969 Piazza Fontana bombing, among other events. Judge Guido Salvini also opened up a case against Sergio Minetto, Italian official for the US-NATO intelligence network, and pentito Carlo Digilio. La Repubblica underlined that Carlo Rocchi, CIA’s man at Milan, was surprised in 1995 searching for information concerning Operation Gladio, thus demonstrating that all was not over.[29]

1969 Piazza Fontana bombing, which started Italy’s anni di piombo, and the 1974 “Italicus Expressen” train bombing were also attributed to Gladio operatives. In 1975, Stefano Delle Chiaie met with Pinochet during Franco’s funeral in Madrid, and would participate afterward in operation Condor, preparing for example the attempted murder of Bernardo Leighton, a Chilean Christian Democrat, or participating in the 1980 ‘Cocaine Coup’ of Luis García Meza Tejada in Bolivia. In 1989, he was arrested in Caracas, Venezuela and extradited to Italy to stand trial for his role in the Piazza Fontana bombing. Despite his reputation, Delle Chiaie was acquitted by the Assize Court in Catanzaro in 1989, along with fellow accused Massimiliano Fachini (as yet no convictions have been made for the attack). According to Avanguardia Nazionale member Vincenzo Vinciguerra: "The December 1969 explosion was supposed to be the detonator which would have convinced the political and military authorities to declare a state of emergency."[29]

The DSSA, another Gladio?

In July 2005, the Italian press revealed the existence of the Department of Anti-terrorism Strategic Studies (DSSA), a "parallel police" created by Gaetano Saya and Riccardo Sindoca, two leaders of the National Union of the Police Forces (UNPF), a trade-union present in all the state security forces. Both said they were former members of Gladio. According to the DSSA website — closed after these revelations — Fabrizio Quattrocchi, murdered in Iraq after being taken hostage, was there “for the DSSA”. According to the Italian investigators, the DSSA was trying to obtain international and national recognition by intelligence agencies, in order to obtain finances for its parallel activities. Furthermore, Il Messaggero, quoted by The Independent, declared that, according to judicial sources, wiretaps suggested DSSA members had been planning to kidnap Cesare Battisti, a former communist activist. "We were seeing the genesis of something similar to the death squads in Argentina" (the AAA groups) the magistrate is reported to have said.[37] [38] [39] [40] [41]

Belgium

After the 1966 retreat of France from NATO, the SHAPE headquarters were displaced to Mons in Belgium. In 1990, following France’s denial of any "stay-behind" French army, Giulio Andreotti publicly said the last Allied Clandestine Committee (ACC) meeting, at which the French branch of Gladio was present, had been on October 23 and 24, 1990, under the presidency of Belgian General Van Calster, director of the Belgian military secret service SGR. In November, Guy Coëme, the Minister of the Defense, acknowledged the existence of a Belgium "stay-behind" army, lifting concerns about a similar implication in terrorist acts as in Italy. The same year, the European Parliament sharply condemned NATO and the United States in a resolution for having manipulated
European politics with the stay-behind armies.[28]

New legislation governing intelligence agencies' missions and methods was passed in 1998, following two government inquiries and the creation of a permanent parliamentary committee in 1991, which was to bring them under the authority of Belgium's federal agencies. The Commission was created following events in the 1980s, which included the Brabant massacres and the activities of far right group Westland New Post.[42]

**France**

In 1947, Interior Minister Edouard Depreux revealed the existence of a secret stay-behind army in France codenamed "Plan Bleu". The next year, the "Western Union Clandestine Committee" (WUCC) was created to coordinate secret unorthodox warfare. In 1949, the WUCC was integrated into NATO, whose headquarters were established in France, under the name "Clandestine Planning Committee" (CPC). In 1958, NATO founded the Allied Clandestine Committee (ACC) to coordinate secret warfare.

The network was supported with elements from SDECE, and had military support from the 11th Choc regiment. The former director of DGSE, admiral Pierre Lacoste, alleged in a 1992 interview with *The Nation*, that certain elements from the network were involved with terrorist activities against de Gaulle and his Algerian policy. A section of the 11th Choc regiment split over the 1962 Evian peace accords, and became part of the *Organisation armée secrète* (OAS), but it is unclear if this also involved members of the French stay-behind network.[43] [44]

*La Rose des Vents* and *Arc-en-ciel* ("Rainbow") network were part of Gladio. François de Grossouvre was Gladio's leader for the region around Lyon in France until his alleged suicide on April 7, 1994. Grossouvre would have asked Constantin Melnik, leader of the French secret services during the Algerian War of Independence (1954–62), to return to activity. He was living in comfortable exile in the US, where he maintained links with the Rand Corporation. Constantin Melnik is alleged to have been involved in the creation in 1952 of the *Ordre Souverain du Temple Solaire*, an ancestor of the Order of the Solar Temple, created by former A.M.O.R.C. members, in which the SDECE (French former military intelligence agency) was interested.[45]

**Denmark**

The Danish stay-behind army was code-named *Absalon*, after a Danish archbishop, and led by E.J. Harder. It was hidden in the military secret service *Forsvarets Efterretningstjeneste* (FE). In 1978, William Colby, former director of the CIA, released his memoirs in which he described the setting-up of stay-behind armies in Scandinavia.[46]

"The situation in each Scandinavian country was different. Norway and Denmark were NATO allies, Sweden held to the neutrality that had taken her through two world wars, and Finland were required to defer in its foreign policy to the Soviet power directly on its borders. Thus, in one set of these countries the governments themselves would build their own stay-behind nets, counting on activating them from exile to carry on the struggle. These nets had to be co-ordinated with NATO's plans, their radios had to be hooked to a future exile location, and the specialised equipment had to be secured from CIA and secretly cached in snowy hideouts for later use. In other set of countries, CIA would have to do the job alone or with, at best, "unofficial" local help, since the politics of those governments barred them from collaborating with NATO, and any exposure would arouse immediate protest from the local Communist press, Soviet diplomats and loyal Scandinavians who hoped that neutrality or nonalignment would allow them to slip through a World War III unharmed."

On November 25, 1990, Danish daily newspaper *Berlingske Tidende*, quoted by Daniele Ganser (2005), confirmed William Colby's revelations, by a source named "Q":

"Colby's story is absolutely correct. Absalon was created in the early 1950s. Colby was a member of the world spanning laymen Catholic organisation Opus Dei, which, using a modern term, could be called right-wing. Opus Dei played a central role in the setting up of Gladio in the whole of Europe and also in Denmark... The leader of Gladio was Harder who was probably not a Catholic. But there are not many
Catholics in Denmark and the basic elements making up the Danish Gladio were former [WW II] resistance people - former prisoners of Vestre Fængsel, Frøslevlejren, Neuengamme and also of the Danish Brigade.

**Germany**

Reinhard Gehlen, Nazi intelligence agent on the East front during the war, turned towards the US after the war, and set up the "Gehlen Organisation," which used many former Nazi party members for intelligence purposes during the Cold War. But alongside the Gehlen organisation, which became the nucleus of the Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND, Federal Intelligence Service), West Germany's intelligence agency created in 1956, US intelligence also set up a German stay-behind network parallel (and juxtaposed) to the Gehlen Org (which also had a role in the organisation of the ODESSA network, used to exfiltrate Nazi war criminals). CIA documents released in June 2006 under the 1998 Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act, more than fifteen years after Prime minister Giulio Andreotti's revelations concerning Gladio, show that the CIA organized "stay-behind" networks of German agents between 1949 and 1955.[47]

One of these networks supported by the CIA was the Technische Dienst (TD, Technical Service) section within the Bund Deutscher Jugend (BDJ, Union of German Youth). The anti-communist BDJ was founded in 1950 by ex-Nazis Erhard Peters and Paul Lüth. The existence of TD came to light, after a speech in the Hesse Landtag by PM Georg August Zinn.[48] During the investigations into BDJ, which started in September 1952, a couple of arms caches were found, including one in the Odenwald region, Hesse.[49] The claim by August Zinn that the BDJ supposedly was in the possession of a list of Social Democrats and Communists to be liquidated in case of a Soviet invasion, including leading figures of the opposition Social Democratic Party[50] ) was denied by German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer.[49] The BDJ was outlawed in January 1953.[51][52]

Documents shown to the Italian parliamentary terrorism committee revealed that in the 1970s British and French officials involved in the network visited a training base in Germany built with US money.[50]

In 1976, the secret service BND secretary Heidrun Hofer was arrested after having revealed the secrets of the German stay-behind army to her husband, who was a spy of the KGB.[28]

**The 1980 Oktoberfest bomb blast**

Revelations of a witness in the investigation of the Oktoberfest bomb blast of 1980 in Munich lead to the conclusion that the explosives might have come from the German Neo-Nazi Heinz Lembke. In 1981, German police by chance found an arms cache in the Lüneburg Heath, which led to the arrest of Lembke and the discovery of other arms caches in Lower Saxony. A few days later Lembke hanged himself in his prison cell. Lembke had been questioned in Oktoberfest investigation, but the public prosecutors found no evidence that he supplied the explosives for the bombing.[53]

Lembke's arms caches were supposed to be connected to Gladio by a number of researchers and journalists.[4]

**CIA's documents released in June 2006**

One network included Staff Sergent Heinrich Hoffman and Lieutenant Colonel Hans Rues, and another one, codenamed Kibitz-15, was run by Lieutenant Colonel Walter Kopp, a former Wehrmacht officer, described by his own North American handlers as an "unreconstructed Nazi."[54] In an April 1953 CIA memo released in June 2006, the CIA headquarters wrote: "The present furor in Western Germany over the resurgence of the Nazi or neo-Nazi groups is a fair example — in miniature — of what we would be faced with." Therefore some of these networks were dismantled. These documents stated that the ex-Nazis were a complete failure in intelligence terms. According to Timothy Naftali, a US historian from the University of Virginia who reviewed the CIA documents then released, "The files show time and again that these people were more trouble than they were worth. The unreconstructed Nazis were always out for themselves, and they were using the West's lack of information about the Soviet Union to
exploit it."[54] The US NARA Archives themselves stated in a 2002 communique, concerning Reinhard Gehlen's recruiting of former Nazis, that "Besides the troubling moral issues involved, these recruitments opened the West German government, and by extension the United States, to penetration by the Soviet intelligence services."[55]

Hans Globke, who had worked for Adolf Eichmann in the Jewish Affairs department and helped draft the 1935 Nuremberg laws, became Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's national security advisor in the 1960s, and "was the main liaison with the CIA and NATO" according to The Guardian.[54] A March 1958 memo from the German BND agency to the CIA wrote that Adolf Eichmann is "reported to have lived in Argentina under the alias CLEMENS since 1952." However, the CIA did not pass the information on to the Israeli MOSSAD, as it feared revelations concerning its use of former Nazis for intelligence purposes — Eichmann, who was in charge of the Jewish Affairs department, was abducted by the MOSSAD two years later. Among these information that might have been revealed by Eichmann were the ones concerning Hans Globke, CIA's liaison in West Germany. At the request of Bonn, the CIA persuaded Life magazine to delete any reference to Globke from Eichmann's memoirs, which it had bought from his family.[47]

Norbert Juretzko's 2004 revelations

In 2004 the German spymaster Norbert Juretzko published a book about his work at the BND. He went into details about recruiting partisans for the German stay-behind network. He was sacked from BND following a secret trial against him, because the BND could not find out the real name of his Russian source "Rübezahl" whom he had recruited. A man with the name he put on file was arrested by the KGB following treason in the BND, but was obviously innocent, his name having been chosen at random from the public phone book by Juretzko.

According to Juretzko, the BND built up its branch of Gladio, but discovered after the fall of the German Democratic Republic that it was 100% known to the Stasi early on. When the network was dismantled, further odd details emerged. One fellow "spymaster" had kept the radio equipment in his cellar at home with his wife doing the engineering test call every 4 months, on the grounds that the equipment was too "valuable" to remain in civilian hands. Juretzko found out because this spymaster had dismantled his section of the network so quickly, there had been no time for measures such as recovering all caches of supplies. Civilians recruited as stay-behind partisans were equipped with a clandestine shortwave radio with a fixed frequency. It had a keyboard with digital encryption, making use of traditional Morse code obsolete. They had a cache of further equipment for signalling helicopters or submarines to drop special agents who were to stay in the partisan's homes while mounting sabotage operations against the communists.

Greece

The aim of British Prime minister Winston Churchill was to prevent the communist-led EAM resistance movement from taking power after the end of World War II. After the suppression of a pro-EAM uprising in April 1944 among the Greek forces in Egypt, a new and firmly reliable unit was formed, the Third Greek Mountain Brigade, which excluded "almost all men with views ranging from moderately conservative to left wing."[56] After liberation in October 1944, EAM controlled most of the country. When it organized a demonstration in Athens on December 3, 1944, members of rightist and pro-royalist paramilitary organizations, covered by "British troops and police with machine guns... posited on the rooftops", suddenly shot on the crowd, killing 25 protesters (including a six-year-old boy) and wounding 148.[57] This marked the outbreak of the Dekemvriana, which would lead to the Greek Civil War.

When Greece joined NATO in 1952, the country's special forces, the LOK (Lochoi Oreinōn Katadromōn, i.e. "Mountain Raiding Companies") were integrated into the European stay-behind network. The CIA and LOK reconfirmed on March 25, 1955 their mutual co-operation in a secret document signed by US General Trascott for the CIA, and Konstantinos Dovas, chief of staff of the Greek military. In addition to preparing for a Soviet invasion, the CIA instructed LOK to prevent a leftist coup. Former CIA agent Philip Agee, who was sharply criticized in the
US for having revealed sensitive information, insisted that "paramilitary groups, directed by CIA officers, operated in the sixties throughout Europe [and he stressed that] perhaps no activity of the CIA could be as clearly linked to the possibility of internal subversion."[58]

The LOK was involved in the Greek military coup d'État on April 21, 1967,[59] which took place one month before the scheduled national elections for which opinion polls predicted an overwhelming victory of the centrist Center Union of George and Andreas Papandreou. Under the command of paratrooper Lieutenant Colonel Costas Aslanides, the LOK took control of the Greek Defence Ministry while Brigadier General Stylianos Pattakos gained control over communication centers, the parliament, the royal palace, and according to detailed lists, arrested over 10,000 people. Phillips Talbot, the US ambassador in Athens, disapproved of the military coup which established the "Regime of the Colonels" (1967–1974), complaining that it represented "a rape of democracy" - to which Jack Maury, the CIA chief of station in Athens, answered: "How can you rape a whore?".[28]

Arrested and then exiled in Canada and Sweden, Andreas Papandreou later returned to Greece, where he won the 1981 election for Prime minister, forming the first socialist government of Greece's post-war history. According to his own testimony, he discovered the existence of the secret NATO army, then codenamed "Red Sheepskin", as acting prime minister in 1984 and had given orders to dissolve it.

Following Giulio Andreotti's revelations in 1990, the Greek defence minister confirmed that a branch of the network, known as Operation Sheepskin, operated in his country until 1988.[60] The socialist opposition called for a parliamentary investigation into the secret army and its alleged link to terrorism and the 1967 coup d'état. Public order minister Yannis Vassiliadis declared that there was no need to investigate such “fantasies” as “Sheepskin was one of 50 NATO plans which foresaw that when a country was occupied by an enemy there should be an organised resistance. It foresaw arms caches and officers who would form the nucleus of a guerilla war. In other words, it was a nationally justifiable act."

In December 2005, journalist Kleanthis Grivas published an article in To Proto Thema, a Greek Sunday newspaper, in which he accused "Sheepskin" for the assassination of CIA station chief Richard Welch in Athens in 1975, as well as the assassination of British military attaché Stephen Saunders in 2000. This was denied by the US State Department, who responded that "the Greek terrorist organization '17 November' was responsible for both assassinations", and that Grivas's central piece of evidence had been the Westmoreland Field Manual which the State department, as well as an independent Congressional inquiry have alleged to be a Soviet forgery.[61] The document in question, however, makes no specific mention of Greece, November 17, nor Welch. The State Department also highlighted the fact that, in the case of Richard Welch, "Grivas bizarrely accuses the CIA of playing a role in the assassination of one of its own senior officials" while "Sheepskin" couldn't have assassinate Stephen Saunders for the simple reason, according to the US government, that "the Greek government stated it dismantled the “stay behind” network in 1988."[61]

Cyprus

The 1960 constitution only had provision for a very small professional army of a few hundred men from both Cypriot communities. Following the 1963-64 clashes that led to the collapse of the power sharing between greek and turkish cypriots, the National Guard was created as a conscription greek cypriot army. The officers for the National Guard where almost exclusively Greek nationals, officers of the greek army. LOK units were created in Cyprus modelled on the Greek LOK units, though Cyprus never joined NATO and was at the time a member of the Non-Aligned Movement. Reporter Makarios Drousiotis[62] has written about Greek officer Dimitris Papapostolou, commander of LOK in Cyprus at the time, conspiring with
ex-interior minister Polykarpos Yorkatzis to kill elected president Makarios by attacking his helicopter, and after the failure of that attempt, being involved in the assassination of Yorkatzis. The 15 July 1974 coup d'état against Makarios was executed by National Guard units, with the attack on the presidential palace perpetrated by 32 Moira Katadromon LOK unit with the help of a tanks reconnaissance unit.

The Netherlands

A large arms cache was discovered in 1983 near the village Velp. In 1990 the government by means of then-prime-minister Ruud Lubbers was forced to confirm that the arms were related to planning for unorthodox warfare. He insisted that the Dutch organisation was, contrary to the operations in other European countries, totally independent from NATO command, and during wartime occupation would be commanded by the Dutch government in exile. The operating bureaus of the organisation would also move to safety in England or the USA at the first sign of trouble.

In his television show of 22 April 2007 Dutch crime journalist Peter R. De Vries revealed that weapons had been illegally supplied to Gladio well after the network was supposed to have been disbanded. [28]

A Dutch investigative television program revealed on September 9, 2007, that an arms cache that belonged to Gladio was ransacked in the 1980s. The cache was located in a forest near Scheveningen. Some of stolen weapons later turned up, including hand grenades and machine guns, when police officials arrested criminals Sam Klepper and John Mieremet in 1991. The Dutch military intelligence agency, MIIVD, feared at that time that the disclosure of the Gladio history of these weapons was politically explosive. [63] [64]

Norway

In 1957, the director of the secret service NIS, Vilhelm Evang, protested strongly against the pro-active intelligence activities at AFNORTH, as described by the chairman of CPC: "[NIS] was extremely worried about activities carried out by officers at Kolsås. This concerned SB, Psywar and Counter Intelligence." These activities supposedly included the blacklisting of Norwegians. SHAPE denied these allegations. Eventually, the matter was resolved in 1958, after Norway was assured about how stay-behind networks were to be operated. [65]

In 1978, the police discovered an arms cache and radio equipment at a mountain cabin and arrested Hans Otto Meyer, a businessman accused of being involved in selling illegal alcohol. Meyer claimed that the weapons were supplied by Norwegian intelligence. Rolf Hansen, defense minister at that time, stated the network was not in any way answerable to NATO and had no CIA connection. [66]

Portugal

In 1966, the CIA set up Aginter Press which, under the direction of Captain Yves Guérin-Sérac (who had taken part in the founding of the OAS), ran a secret stay-behind army and trained its members in covert action techniques amounting to terrorism, including bombings, silent assassinations, subversion techniques, clandestine communication and infiltration and colonial warfare. Aginter Press was suspected of having assassinated General Humberto Delgado (1906–1965), founder of the Portuguese National Liberation Front against Salazar's dictatorship (prominent historians and several sources also claim Delgado's assassination was performed by PIDE operational Rosa Casaco), as well as anti-colonialist leader Amilcar Cabral (1924–1973), founder of the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde) and Eduardo Mondlane leader of the liberation movement FRELIMO (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique), in 1969 (prominent historians and several sources also claim Cabral's assassination was performed by individuals within Cabral's guerrilla movement, the PAIGC, and Mondlane's death was work of his enemies inside FRELIMO - according to these versions, both assassinations were the result of struggles for power within the independentist movements). [28] [67]
Turkey

As one of the nations that prompted the Truman Doctrine, Turkey is one of the first countries to participate in Operation Gladio and, some say, the only country where it has not been purged. According to Italian magistrate Felice Casson, the Turkish stay-behind forces are two-pronged: the military "Counter-Guerrilla", and the civilian "Ergenekon". An offshoot of the latter organization is currently the subject of a major investigation. Casson says Turkey is home to the most powerful branch of Operation Gladio.

The counter-guerrilla's existence in Turkey was revealed in 1973 by then prime minister Bülent Ecevit, and he immediately became a target for several assassination plots.

During the ongoing trials since summer of 2008 it has been revealed that the group named Ergenekon is actually consisted of Armed Forces officers and various civilians working to influence the governments of Turkey, either by subversion or direct coup d'état.

The United Kingdom

In Great Britain, Prime Minister Winston Churchill created the Special Operations Executive (SOE) in 1940 to assist resistance movements and carry out subversive operations in enemy-held territory across occupied Europe. Guardian reporter David Pallister wrote in December 1990 that a guerrilla network with arms caches had been put in place following the fall of France. It included Brigadier "Mad Mike" Calvert, and was drawn from a special-forces ski battalion of the Scots Guards which was originally intended to fight in Nazi-occupied Finland. Known as Auxiliary Units, they were headed by Major Colin Gubbins, an expert in guerrilla warfare who would later lead the SOE. The Auxiliary Units were attached to GHQ Home Forces, and concealed within the Home Guard. The units were created in preparation of a possible invasion of the British Isles by the Third Reich. These units were allegedly stood down only in 1944. Several of their members subsequently joined the Special Air Service and saw action in France in late 1944. The units' existence did not generally become known by the public until the 1990s though a book on the subject was published in 1968. In fiction, Owen Sheers' Resistance (2008), set in Wales, takes as one of its central characters a member of the Auxiliary Units called to resist a successful German invasion.

After the end of World War II, the stay-behind armies were created with the experience and involvement of former SOE officers. Following Giulio Andreotti's October 1990 revelations, General Sir John Hackett (1910–1997), former commander-in-chief of the British Army on the Rhine, declared on November 16, 1990 that a contingency plan involving "stay behind and resistance in depth" was drawn up after the war. The same week, Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley (1924–2006), former commander-in-chief of NATO's Forces in Northern Europe from 1979 to 1982, declared to The Guardian that a secret arms network was established in Britain after the war. General John Hackett had written in 1978 a novel, The Third World War: August 1985, which was a fictionalized scenario of a Soviet Army invasion of West Germany in 1985. The novel was followed in 1982 by The Third World War: The Untold Story, which elaborated on the original. Farrar-Hockley had aroused controversy in 1983 when he became involved in trying to organise a campaign for a new Home Guard against eventual Soviet invasion.

Gladio membership included mostly ex-servicemen but also followers of Oswald Mosley's pre-war fascist movement. Among the 200,000+ Polish ex-servicemen in the UK after the end of World War II, unable to return home for fear of communist repression, were conspiratorial groups maintaining combat readiness ready to fight for a free Poland should the Warsaw Pact attack western Europe. The 'Pogon' organisation, linked to the Polish Government-in-Exile held regular paramilitary exercises until the 1970s; many of its members were associated with the Polish scouting movement in the UK which had a strong paramilitary flavour. Links with 'Stay-behind' networks are strongly suspected.
Operation Gladio

General Serravalle's revelations

General Gerardo Serravalle, who commanded the Italian Gladio from 1971 to 1974, related that "in the 1970s the members of the CPC [Coordination and Planning Committee] were the officers responsible for the secret structures of Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Luxemburg, the Netherlands and Italy. These representatives of the secret structures met every year in one of the capitals... At the stay-behind meetings representatives of the CIA were always present. They had no voting rights and were from the CIA headquarters of the capital in which the meeting took place... members of the US Forces Europe Command were present, also without voting rights. ".[74] Next to the CPC a second secret command post was created in 1957, the Allied Clandestine Committee (ACC). According to the Belgian Parliamentary Committee on Gladio, the ACC was "responsible for coordinating the 'Stay-behind' networks in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourgh, Holland, Norway, United Kingdom and the United States". During peacetime, the activities of the ACC "included elaborating the directives for the network, developing its clandestine capability and organising bases in Britain and the United States. In wartime, it was to plan stay-behind operations in conjunction with SHAPE; organisers were to activate clandestine bases and organise operations from there".[75] General Serravalle declared to the Commissione Stragi headed by senator Giovanni Pellegrino that the Italian Gladio members trained at a military base in Britain.[50] Documents shown to the committee also revealed that British and French officials members of Gladio had visited in the 1970s a training base in Germany built with US money.[50]

The Guardian's November 1990 revelations concerning plans under Margaret Thatcher

*The Guardian* reported on November 5, 1990, that there had been a "secret attempt to revive elements of a parallel post-war plan relating to overseas operations" in the "early days of Mrs Thatcher's Conservative leadership". According to the British newspaper, "a group of former intelligence officers, inspired by the wartime Special Operations Executive, attempted to set up a secret unit as a kind of armed MI6 cell. Those behind the scheme included Airey Neave, Mrs Thatcher's close adviser who was killed in a terrorist attack in 1979, and George Kennedy Young, a former deputy chief of the Secret Intelligence Service, MI6." The newspaper stated that Thatcher had been "initially enthusiastic but dropped the idea after the scandal surrounding the attack by the French secret service on the Greenpeace ship, Rainbow Warrior, in New Zealand in 1985."

Parallel stay-behind operations in non-NATO countries

**Austria**

In Austria, the first secret stay-behind army was exposed in 1947. It had been set up by far-right Soucek and Rössner, who both insisted during their trial that "they were carrying out the secret operation with the full knowledge and support of the US and British occupying powers." Sentenced to death, they were then pardoned under mysterious circumstances by President Körner (1951–1957).

Franz Olah set up a new secret army codenamed *Österreichischer Wander-Sport-und Geselligkeitsverein* (OWSGV, literally "Austrian hiking, sports and society club"), with the cooperation of MI6 and the CIA. He later explained that "we bought cars under this name. We installed communication centres in several regions of Austria", confirming that "special units were trained in the use of weapons and plastic explosives". He precised that "there must have been a couple of thousand people working for us... Only very, very highly positioned politicians and some members of the union knew about it".

In 1965, the police forces discovered a stay-behind arms cache in an old mine close to Windisch-Bleiberg and forced the British authorities to hand over a list with the location of 33 other caches in Austria.[28] In 1990, when secret "stay-behind" armies were discovered all around Europe, the Austrian government said that no secret army had existed in the country. However, six years later, the *Boston Globe* revealed the existence of a secret
CIA arms caches in Austria. Austrian President Thomas Klestil and Chancellor Franz Vranitzky insisted that they had known nothing of the existence of the secret army and demanded that the US launch a full-scale investigation into the violation of Austria's neutrality, which was denied by President Bill Clinton. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns - appointed in August 2001 by President George Bush as the US Permanent Representative to the Atlantic treaty organization, where, as ambassador to NATO, he headed the combined State-Defense Department United States Mission to NATO and coordinated the NATO response to the September 11, 2001 attacks - insisted: "The aim was noble, the aim was correct, to try to help Austria if it was under occupation. What went wrong is that successive Washington administrations simply decided not to talk to the Austrian government about it."[4]

Finland

In 1944, the Swedes worked with Finnish Intelligence to set up a stay-behind network of agents within Finland to keep track of post-war activities in that country. While this network was allegedly never put in place, Finnish codes, SIGINT equipment and documents were brought to Sweden and apparently exploited until the 1980s.[77]

In 1945, Interior Minister Yrjö Leino exposed a secret stay-behind army which was closed down (so called Weapons Cache Case). This operation was organized by Finnish general staff officers (without foreign help) in 1944 to hide weapons in order to sustain a large-scale guerilla warfare in the event the Soviet Union tried to occupy Finland in the aftermath of the Continuation War. See also Operation Stella Polaris.

In 1991, the Swedish media claimed that a secret stay-behind army had existed in neutral Finland with an exile base in Stockholm. Finnish Defence Minister Elisabeth Rehn called the revelations "a fairy tale", adding cautiously "or at least an incredible story, of which I know nothing."[28] However, in his memoirs, former CIA director William Colby described the setting-up of stay-behind armies in Scandinavian countries, including Finland, with or without the assistance of local governments, to prepare for a Soviet invasion.[46]

Spain

Several events prior to Spain's 1982 membership in NATO have also been tied to Gladio: In May 1976, a year after Franco's death, two left-wing Carlist members were shot down by far-right terrorists, among whom Gladio operative Stefano Delle Chiaie and members of the Argentine Anticommunist Alliance (Triple A), demonstrating connections between Gladio and the South American "Dirty War". This incident became known as the Montejurra massacre.[78]

According to a report by the Italian CESIS (Executive Committee for Intelligence and Security Services), Carlo Cicuttini (who took part in the 1972 Peteano bombing in Italy alongside Vincenzo Vinciguerra), participated in the 1977 Massacre of Atocha in Madrid, killing five people (including several lawyers), members of the Workers' Commissions trade-unions closely linked with the Spanish Communist Party. Cicuttini was naturalized Spanish and exiled in Spain since 1972 (date of the Peteano bombing).[79]

Following Andreotti's 1990 revelations, Adolfo Suárez, Spain's first democratically elected Prime minister after Franco's death, denied ever having heard of Gladio.[80] President of the Spanish government in 1981-82, during the transition to democracy, Calvo Sotelo stated that Spain had not been informed of Gladio when it entered NATO. Asked about Gladio's relations to Franquist Spain, he said that such a network was not necessary under Franco, since "the regime itself was Gladio."[81]

According to General Fausto Fortunato, head of Italian SISMI from 1971 to 1974, France and the US had backed Spain's entrance to Gladio, but Italy would have opposed its veto to it. Following Andreotti's revelations, however, Narcís Serra, Spanish Minister of Defense, opened up an investigation concerning Spain's links to Gladio.[82] [83] Furthermore, Canarias 7 newspaper revealed, quoting former Gladio agent Alberto Volo, who had a role in the revelations of the existence of the network in 1990, that a Gladio meeting had been organized in August 1991 in the Gran Canaria island.[84] Alberto Vollo also declared that as a Gladio operative, he had received trainings in Maspalomas, in the Gran Canaria island between the 1960s and the 1970s. El País daily also revealed that the Gladio organization was suspected of having used former NASA installations in Maspalomas, in the Gran Canaria
island, in the 1970s.\footnote{86}

André Moyen, former Belgian secret agent, also declared that Gladio had operated in Spain.\footnote{87} He said that Gladio had bases in Madrid, Barcelona, San Sebastián and the Canarias islands.

**Sweden**

In 1951, CIA agent William Colby, based at the CIA station in Stockholm, supported the training of stay-behind armies in neutral Sweden and Finland and in the NATO members Norway and Denmark. In 1953, the police arrested right winger Otto Hallberg and discovered the preparations for the Swedish stay-behind army. Hallberg was set free and charges against him were dropped.\footnote{28}

**Switzerland**

In Switzerland, a secret army named P26 was discovered, by coincidence months before Giulio Andreotti’s October 1990 revelations. After the "secret files scandal" (Fichenaffäre), Swiss parliamentaries started investigating the Defense Department in the summer of 1990. According to Felix Würsten of the ETH Zurich, "P26 was not directly involved in the network of NATO's secret armies but it had close contact to MI6."\footnote{88} Daniele Ganser (ETH Zurich) wrote in the *Intelligence and National Security* review that "following the discovery of the stay-behind armies across Western Europe in late 1990, Swiss and international security researchers found themselves confronted with two clear-cut questions: Did Switzerland also operate a secret stay-behind army? And if yes, was it part of NATO's stay-behind network? The answer to the first question is clearly yes... The answer to the second question remains disputed..."\footnote{89}

Swiss Major Hans von Dach published in 1958 *Der totale Widerstand, Kleinkriegsanleitung für jedermann* ("Total Resistance," Bienne, 1958) concerning guerrilla warfare, a book of 180 pages about passive and active resistance to a foreign invasion, including detailed instructions on sabotage, clandestinity, methods to dissimulate weapons, struggle against police moles, etc.\footnote{90}

In 1990, Colonel Herbert Alboth, a former commander of the Swiss secret stay-behind army P26 declared in a confidential letter to the Defence Department that he was willing to reveal "the whole truth". He was later found in his house, stabbed with his own military bayonet. The detailed parliamentary report on the Swiss secret army was presented to the public on November 17, 1990.\footnote{28} According to *The Guardian*, "P26 was backed by P27, a private foreign intelligence agency funded partly by the government, and by a special unit of Swiss army intelligence which had built up files on nearly 8,000 "suspect persons" including "leftists", "bill stickers", "Jehovah's witnesses", people with "abnormal tendencies" and anti-nuclear demonstrators. On November 14, the Swiss government hurriedly dissolved P26 — the head of which, it emerged, had been paid £100,000 a year."\footnote{59}

In 1991, a report by Swiss magistrate Pierre Cornu was released by the Swiss defence ministry. It said that P26 was without "political or legal legitimacy", and described the group's collaboration with British secret services as "intense". "Unknown to the Swiss government, British officials signed agreements with the organisation, called P26, to provide training in combat, communications, and sabotage. The latest agreement was signed in 1987... P26 cadres participated regularly in training exercises in Britain... British advisers — possibly from the SAS — visited secret training establishments in Switzerland." P26 was led by Efrem Cattelan, known to British intelligence.\footnote{76}

In a 2005 conference presenting Daniele Ganser's research on Gladio, Hans Senn, General Chief of Staff of the Swiss Army between 1977 and 1980, explained how he was informed of the existence of a secret organisation in the middle of his term of office. According to him, it already became clear in 1980 in the wake of the Schilling/Bachmann affair that there was also a secret group in Switzerland. But former MP, Helmut Hubacher, President of the Social Democratic Party from 1975 to 1990, declared that although it had been known that "special services" existed within the army, as a politician he never at any time could have known that the secret army P26 was behind this. Hubacher pointed out that the President of the parliamentary investigation into P26 (PUK-EMD), the right-wing politician from Appenzell and member of the Council of States for that Canton, Carlo Schmid, had
suffered "like a dog" during the commission's investigations. Carlo Schmid declared to the press: "I was shocked that something like that is at all possible," and said to the press he was glad to leave the "conspirational atmosphere" which had weighted upon him like a "black shadow" during the investigations.\[91\] Hubacher found it especially disturbing that, apart from its official mandate of organizing resistance in case of a Soviet invasion, P26 had also a mandate to become active should the left succeed in achieving a parliamentary majority.\[88\]

**FOIA requests and US State Department's 2006 communiqué**

Three Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests have been filed to the CIA, which has rejected them with the Glomar response: "The CIA can neither confirm nor deny the existence or non-existence of records responsive to your request." One request was filed by the National Security Archive in 1991; another by the Italian Senate commission headed by Senator Giovanni Pellegrino in 1995 concerning Gladio and Aldo Moro's murder; the last one in 1996, by Oliver Rathkolb, of Vienna university, for the Austrian government, concerning the secret stay-behind armies after a discovery of an arms-cache.\[28\]

Furthermore, the US State Department published a communiqué in January 2006 which, while confirming the existence of stay-behind armies, in general, and the presence of the "Gladio" stay-behind unit in Italy, in particular, with the purpose of aiding resistance in the event of Soviet aggression directed Westward, from the Warsaw Pact, dismissed claims of any United States ordered, supported, or authorized skullduggery by stay-behind units. In fact, it claims that, on the contrary, the accusations of US-sponsored "false flag" operations are rehashed former Soviet disinformation based on documents that the Soviets themselves forged; specifically the researchers are alleged to have been influenced by the Westmoreland Field Manual, whose forged nature was confirmed by former KGB operatives, following the end of the Cold War. However since then counter sources from within gladio and the CIA have admitted its authenticity. The alleged Soviet-authored forgery, disseminated in the 1970s, explicitly formulated the need for a "strategy of tension" involving violent attacks blamed on radical left-wing groups in order to convince allied governments of the need for counter-action. It also rejected a Communist Greek journalist's allegations made in December 2005 (See above).\[61\]

**Politicians on Gladio**

Whilst the existence of a "stay-behind" organization such as Gladio was disputed, prior to its confirmation by Giulio Andreotti, with some skeptics describing it as a conspiracy theory, several high ranking politicians in NATO countries have made statements appearing to confirm the existence of something like what is described:

- Former Italian prime minister Giulio Andreotti ("Gladio had been necessary during the days of the Cold War but, that in view of the collapse of the East Bloc, Italy would suggest to NATO that the organisation was no longer necessary.")
- Former French minister of defense Jean-Pierre Chevènement ("a structure did exist, set up at the beginning of the 1950s, to enable communications with a government that might have fled abroad in the event of the country being occupied.").
- Former Greek defence minister, Yannis Varvitsiotis ("local commandos and the CIA set up a branch of the network in 1955 to organise guerrilla resistance to any communist invader")

As noted above, the US has now acknowledged the existence of Operation Gladio.
External links


Books


Films

- Alan Francovich, BBC Documentary Gladio (1992 three-part BBC documentary)
- Michele Placido, Romanzo Criminale (2005, concerning the strategy of tension and the Banda della Magliana)
- Renzo Martinelli, Five Moons Plaza at the Internet Movie Database (Piazza delle cinque lune) (2003)
- Conspirator: The Story of Licio Gelli at the Internet Movie Database (2009)

Gladio in Fiction

A precise analogue of Operation Gladio was described in the 1949 fiction novel "An Affair of State" by Pat Frank. In Frank's version, U.S. State Dept officers recruit a stay-behind network in Hungary to fight an insurgency against the Soviet Union after the Soviet Union launches an attack on and captures Western Europe.

See also

- List of assassinated people from Turkey
- Fifth column
- Sledgehammer (coup plan)

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[10] See for ex. links between Italian neofascist terrorist Stefano delle Chiaie, whom was protected by the Italian SISMI, and the DINA; including assassination attempts on Bernardo Leighton, Carlos Altamirano, Andrés Pascal Allende (Salvador Allende's nephew), etc. Delle Chiaie also worked with Argentine death-squad Triple A and Bolivian dictator Hugo Banzer. Las relaciones secretas entre Pinochet, Franco y la P2, Conspiración para matar (http://www.derechos.org/sorin/doc/plp2.html), Sergio Sorin, February 4, 1999
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57] Ganser (2005), pp.213-214 (his quote)


1990'lı yılların başında bati ülkeleri, Gladio'nun faaliyetlerine son verdi. Sorumluların yargılanması. Türkiye hariç."
Operation Gladio


[78] Crimes of Montejurra (Good Google translation) (http://www.montejurra-jarramendi.3a2.com/)


[92] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZSqXUsHRI


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Operation Gladio


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