

# Italy Daily



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*Disputes Also Underscore Split Within Left*

## Assisi March Sparks Pacifist War

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Storm clouds brewed all week around a peace march in Umbria scheduled for Sunday, turning an event aimed at unifying people under a common goal into yet another cause for strife for the fragile center-left opposition.

The loud clashes over the Perugia-Assisi March for Peace, whose slogan this year is, "Food, Water and Jobs for All," brought to the fore new differences within a coalition that had already split this week over Italy's support to the United States' bombing of Afghanistan.

Relations among pacifist groups also frayed as fears emerged that some could use the peace march as a show of anti-American sentiment. In particular, several Catholic pacifist groups pulled out, worried that the same kind of rioting that marred the G-8 demonstrations in Genoa could occur in Assisi.

Indeed, some anti-globalization demonstrators vowed to contest the presence at the march of the center-left parties that voted in favor of military intervention in Afghanistan.

On Tuesday, the opposition split in Parliament over Italian support of the U.S.-led military mission in Afghanistan.

Ignoring a plea for unity from Francesco Rutelli, the nominal leader of the center-left, the Greens and the Party of Italian

Communists, junior partners in the coalition, presented their own motion condemning the strike. Even some members of the Democratic Left voted this document in spite of the official party line, which backed the bombing.

Adding fuel to the fire, on Thursday La Repubblica daily published an "open letter to the pacifists," signed by the leaders of the opposition — Mr. Rutelli, Democratic Left officials Piero Fassino and Massimo D'Alema, and former Prime Ministers Giuliano Amato and Lamberto Dini. In the letter, the officials explained why they backed military intervention but still planned to march in Perugia on Sunday.

"The use of force can't be taboo. Sometimes it emerges like a painful need to prevent greater tragedies," the letter said.

Infuriated anti-globalization groups called the left on what they perceived as hypocritical behavior and promised to contest their presence during the march.

Arguing that in recent years the peace march had lost its meaning, Francesco Caruso, a spokesman for the No-Global movement, said that recent international events provided a renewed focus to the event.

"There's a choice to be made and it's for peace or for war, and this choice is breaking up the traditional aggregations of political

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## Army Potent

Compiled by Our Staff

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## Malpensa and Other Airports Might Be at Risk, Experts Warn

By Heather Prentice  
Reuters

Italy's worst civil aviation disaster at Milan's Linate airport this week could be repeated at other airports, such as Malpensa, which is similarly prone to fog and has no operational ground radar, experts said on Friday.

On Monday, 118 people were killed when an executive jet mistakenly crossed the main runway at Linate in heavy fog just as a Scandinavian Airlines System jetliner was accelerating to take off.

The crash has triggered at least three investigations and a heated debate about Linate's lack of a functioning ground radar system, which, while not mandatory, was recommended by international aviation bodies.

"It was an accident of horrifying simplicity. It is a risk that exists in bad weather at any airport without a surface movement radar," David Learmount, safety editor of Flight Interna-

Pellegrino of Italy's flight safety agency, an independent body that reports to Parliament. Experts argue that a ground monitoring system is essential if the airport conducts a large volume of air traffic, suffers from poor weather or covers a large area. The only functioning system in Italy is at Fiumicino.

Ground surveillance is less necessary at smaller airports such as Bologna, Genoa and Naples where controllers can see the planes. But other safety features, notably wind shear detectors to reveal strong downdraft which could affect planes on takeoff, are lacking at airports such as Genoa and Palermo, which often have bad weather, pilots' bodies say.

The state of runways also leaves something to be desired, as does communication between the various groups which run the mostly state-owned airports, Italy's flight safety agency says.

Italy's flight safety agency said on Thursday it had sent a fax to the civil





# NEWS

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parties and organizations," Mr. Caruso told Italy Daily. "Rutelli has no business in being here because he chose war over peace."

Mr. Rutelli's own partners were perhaps the first to agree. A debate raged Friday over whether the centrist Daisy group should participate in the march. Mr. Rutelli, who heads the Daisy as well as the entire coalition, pledged he would attend, warning protesters against turning the march into a scene of violence. "No one should even think about turning the Perugia-Assisi peace march into a rerun of Genoa," he said.

Mr. Caruso said that fears that the march could turn ugly were unfounded. "Rutelli knows well that it's absurd to think that this will turn violent, though there will be moments of tension," he said. The group represented by Mr. Caruso will not participate in the march itself, but will hold a rally in Assisi.

On Friday, other organizations announced they would desert the march, a sign some said indicated the left and the pacifists were no longer sure where to draw the line on nonviolence. The march organizers and some anti-globalization groups say that diplomacy and freezing the terrorists' financial resources are the best path to combat terrorism.

But for many, peace might not always be achieved without resorting to violence. "Pacifism is an important patrimony, but you can't adopt it as a concrete solution to problems," argued on Friday Silvio Suppa, a professor at the University of Bari during a radio program on state broadcaster RAI. "A war has been declared by the Talebans, and their warriors use terrorism to fight this war. The world has to reclaim peace as a point of arrival, but pacifism is



Sunday's peace march will end in Assisi. Above, the facade of the Basilica of St. Francis.

not a strong political means to get there."

Pacifism as a movement has roots in ancient times but in its contemporary form it evolved worldwide during the second half of the 18th century. In Italy, the movement has taken two distinct, though often intersecting paths — Catholic and left-wing. Sometimes at odds and sometimes in synch, the two movements traditionally came together in Assisi.

The first Perugia to Assisi peace march was held in 1961, when Aldo Capitini, an Umbria philosopher and nonviolent activist, launched the idea as a means to bring together people of different backgrounds under the common aim of promoting peace.

As pacifists of all walks argued with another, the Franciscans who co-organized the march tried to veer the focus back on its aims, releasing a strongly worded statement that said: "The grave events that humanity is living solicit a strong call for peace. The march can't be in favor or against anyone, but only an expression of an authentic desire for peace. Those who don't respect this criterion but pursue ideological or political objects are not in harmony with the spirit of the march."

A representative of the Peace Roundtable that organized the march also tried to reroute attention away from debates and back to the event itself.

Since 1995, the march has concluded the assembly of United Nations of People, a meeting of more than 200 lawmakers and representatives of NGOs from 120 countries. This year, the assembly's agenda was a debate on the international role of Europe vis-à-vis the launch of the Euro.

"The real protagonists of the Perugia-Assisi march are those participating in the assembly, who are discussing important issues, and not minor ones like the global no-global debate," Peace Roundtable spokesman Davide Berruti told Italy Daily.

"Certainly there are divisions among the left and we have clearly stated in our response [to the Repubblica letter] that we are against the war and the bombings," he said. "But mindful of the words of Capitini who had to deal with the same disputes 40 years ago, we say that the march is open to everyone."

## Travel

All flights were suspended Friday at Bolzano airport by order of ENAV, the national air traffic controllers body. The airport, managed by Tyrolean Airways, said the closure was ordered due to the "apparent malfunctioning" of a localizing device enabling planes to land at night, in fog, or in other low visibility conditions. Orsa, a wildcat railway union, announced that it had called off a 24-hour strike planned for the weekend.

A new train service now connects Palermo's central station to the Punta Raisi airport. The 45-minute trip runs on the hour from 5 A.M. to midnight.

## Weather

temp	min c/f	max c/f
Bologna	13/55	24/75
Bolzano	5/41	21/70
Brindisi	16/61	22/72
Cagliari	14/57	24/75
Catania	18/64	26/79



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## Love Their Dogs

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a warm evening in the walled city of Lucca. We were out for a walk, and we saw a stray pick a fight with a German shepherd on a leash, get scared off by the shepherd's master, run away down the street, get mad, turn around and go back for more.

The attacker was a stout mix of terrier, pit bull and something akin to wolverine. He was light-colored with a broad face and brown markings. He had rippling muscles and short legs. The shepherd was healthy and large, not one to be trifled with. His only obvious disadvantage was that he was on a leash. At the other end of his leash was his master, a hulking guy in his mid-thirties, also not to be trifled with. When the mongrel first attacked, the shepherd engaged fiercely, and his master yanked him out of the fray and stomped hard on the

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