

Series of Fraud Cases Publicized By Italian Press

By ERNEST SAKLER
United Press International
ROME (UPI) — A series of fraud cases, including that of a gay customs inspector, his wife and his mistress, has given Italian newspaper readers the impression that the easiest thing in the world is to spy their government in a big way.

The most publicized incident involved inspector Cesare Mastrella, 48, who was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment by a Terni court for embezzling more than 1 billion lire (\$1.6 million) from the state.

The case fascinated Italians. Elegant, efficient Mastrella seemed to enjoy his trial for the chance it gave him to demonstrate the confusion of Italian customs laws and the ineffectiveness of controls.

Perfectly at ease between his two co-defendants — his wife Aletta and his mistress Anna Maria Tomaselli — he admitted pocketing the billion during his three years as head of the customs office in Terni, an industrial town, through forged receipts, "customs refunds" to Terni firms and other devices.

"Fed Up"

Mastrella told the court that if he had been one of the inspectors from Rome who regularly checked his books it would have taken him five minutes to detect everything. In fact, the embezzlement went undiscovered through 27 routine inspections and came to light only when Mastrella gave himself up, saying he was "fed up with all this."

He said he gambled huge sums on the soccer pool every week and impartially gave the two women sports cars and bought them shops, real estate and other property.

Mastrella's main preoccupation during the trial was to convince the court that his wife and mistress knew nothing about the embezzlement and thought that his money came from soccer pool winnings.

The women were sentenced to short terms and released at once because the court counted time they had served awaiting trial.

The trial was barely over when magistrates in Milan ordered 83 persons to stand trial on charges of another 1 billion lire fraud against the state.

Less Spectacular
The case dated back to 1957 and the method used by the 63 men, according to the prosecution, was less spectacular than Mastrella's but equally effective.

A number of companies pretended to export textiles to other countries. They promptly got tax refunds under an Italian law intended to stimulate exports.

As it turned out, the shipments they made consisted only of rags. In some cases, they did not bother to make any shipments at all.

In another case, customs police said 11 Milan businessmen evaded an estimated 1,760,000,000 lire (\$2,816,000) in customs duties and taxes by importing "sugared flour" with a sugar content far in excess of specifications. The sugar was then separated from the flour in special plants.

Import duties on sugar are far heavier than on sugared flour. Police said the racket had been going on since 1956 and was only discovered because imports in recent months were stepped up at a suspicious rate.

District Office In Winema Moves

KLAMATH FALLS — Headquarters for the Chiloquin Ranger District of the Winema National Forest will be moved effective Nov. 1 from the old Klamath Agency headquarters to a new station development on U. S. 97, District Ranger Homer Faulkner has announced.

The station is on U. S. 97 one-quarter of a mile north of the Chiloquin junction and opposite the Chiloquin city airstrip.

The new headquarters site will provide offices and residence for key personnel engaged in management of the Chiloquin District. Buildings, which were just completed, were constructed under contract, and is another step in the multiple use management program under Forest Service administration of the former Reservation lands.

New mailing address for the Chiloquin District will be District Ranger, Post Office Box 357, Chiloquin.

Texas Shipping French Poodles to France

GAINESVILLE, Tex. (UPI)—Texas has begun exporting poodles to France.

A small male poodle from a Gainesville breeder was put aboard a jet plane at Dallas for the flight to Paris. It was ordered by a U.S. serviceman and his wife, stationed in Paris.





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- 22-OZ. BOTTLE 49c **Fels Liquid Detergent** . . . 32-oz. bottle **69c**
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- Budget-priced **Plymouth Bleach** . . . Gallon jug **49c**
- Pine scent **Dutch Cleanser** . . . 2 reg. tins **29c**

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