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Armed Revolutionary Nuclei

Formed	October 1977
Disbanded	1988
First Attack	December 24, 1977: NAR members wounded a leftist student in Rome (0 killed, 1 wounded).**[1] (#note1)**
Last Attack	August 14, 1988: NAR members unsuccessfully attempted to bomb police headquarters in Milan (0 killed).**[2] (#note2)**
Updated	April 24, 2012

Narrative Summary

Armed Revolutionary Nuclei (NAR) was the largest and most violent right-wing terrorist organization in Italy during the second half of the 1970s.**[3] (#note3)** It was responsible for several individual murders as well as the worst terrorist attack in post-War Italian history, a bombing in a Bologna train station that killed 85.**[4] (#note4)** It formed in part to coordinate the right-wing militants scattered after authorities banned the three main neo-fascist militant groups in the mid-1970s.**[5] (#note5)** NAR differed a great deal from its predecessors in its goals, structure, and attitude toward the left.

Some of NAR's founding documents deride the failure of the early right-wing militant groups of the post-World War II period, the most prominent among them being New Order, Black Order, and National Front. In particular, NAR's founders rejected those groups' focus on staging a coup against the Italian government and replacing it with a fascist regime.**[6] (#note6)** NAR instead embraced a less well-defined anti-state program of undermining the state through widespread violence.

NAR to that end had a fluid and less-hierarchical structure than its predecessors, and in some respects was less a real organization than a name. It had leaders but also encouraged the use of its name to claim any attacks with a revolutionary purpose.**[7] (#note7)** Among its more formal membership, it embraced a program of "armed spontaneity," where attacks would not necessarily be planned and organized from a central authority.**[8] (#note8)** In this it mirrored the leftist militant organizations of the second half of the 1970s, who similarly rejected

the hierarchical organization of earlier groups on their side.**[9] (#note9)**

NAR was neo-fascist but not explicitly anti-Communist, and on several occasions attempted to strike an alliance with left-wing groups. Left-wing groups did not respond to these overtures, however.

The group declined rapidly throughout the 1980s due to arrests tied to the Bologna train station massacre. Its decline was also hastened by internal fighting as members became increasingly concerned about informants.**[10] (#note10)** In a pattern typical of both left- and right-wing groups, arrested members often cooperated with authorities, leading to the arrest of more group members. However weakened, the group continued to claim attacks until 1988.**[11] (#note11)**

Leadership

1. Dario Pedretti (Unknown to Unknown): Pedretti was NAR's theorist.**[12] (#note12)**
2. Francesca Mambro (1979 to Unknown): Mambro was the daughter of a policeman. She named the organization and led NAR's "women nucleus."**[13] (#note13)**
3. Giusva Fioravanti (1979 to February 1981): Giusva Fioravanti was the main leader of NAR. He was one of its chief advocates of spontaneous, as opposed to organized, action. He committed around 10 murders over the course of his career in terrorism and was involved in the Bologna train station bombing that killed 85. He was wounded and arrested in a shootout with police in 1981.**[14] (#note14)**
4. Cristiano Fioravanti (1979 to April 1981): Cristiano Fioravanti was the brother of NAR's main leader, Giusva. He became an informant for police after his arrest in 1981.**[15] (#note15)**

Ideology & Goals

- Neo-fascist
- Right wing

NAR identified itself as a fascist group. In addition to the traditional Italian fascist texts, NAR and other fascist militant groups of the second half of the 1970s were especially influenced by the fantasy writings of J.R.R. Tolkien, whose *Lord of the Ring* series was thought to exemplify such traditionally fascist themes as heroism.**[16] (#note16)**

NAR was not explicitly anti-Communist, however. The group did fight left-wing groups on occasion, but it also sought to unite all anti-state groups and several times tried unsuccessfully to join forces, or at least cease hostilities, with the left.**[17] (#note17)** This represented an ideological break with the previous generation of Italian right-wing militant groups.

NAR also rejected the goal of earlier fascist groups to stage a coup. Its precise goals regarding the shape of a future Italian state were not clear.**[18] (#note18)** This was in part because NAR's membership was younger than that of the first generation Italian fascist groups and had not actually lived under or fought on behalf of the fascist state in Italy.**[19] (#note19)** It was also in part because NAR encouraged the use of its name to claim attacks not formally affiliated to its organization but having a revolutionary purpose.**[20] (#note20)**

Resources

NAR, like left-wing groups, largely supported itself through robberies, especially of arms depots.**[21] (#note21)**

External Influences

Individual NAR members had informal connections to other countries, it is unclear whether the group received formal state support. There is murky evidence of international involvement in the bombing of the Bologna train station attributed to NAR. One NAR member arrested in the aftermath of the attack was the founder of the Italian-Libyan friendship society. A member of the French neo-fascist group European National Action Federation (FANE) was also arrested in the aftermath of the attack.**[22] (#note22)**

Like other Italian neo-fascist terrorist groups, NAR took inspiration from other European right-wing groups and embraced some of the tenets of Germany's Nazi party.

Targets & Tactics

NAR did not typically carry out the mass-casualty bombings associated with earlier right-wing groups, though it claimed responsibility for the 1980 bombing of a Bologna train station that killed 85 in the worst terrorist attack in Italian history.**[23] (#note23)** NAR's overall tactical posture was one of "armed spontaneity" as opposed to organized violence. NAR was more likely to claim responsibility for attacks than previous right-wing groups were, under either its own name or the name Popular Revolutionary Movement (MPR), to give the impression of an ever-multiplying set of terrorist groups.**[24] (#note24)**

NAR mostly used firearms and at times grenades to conduct raids or kill selected individuals including law enforcement officers, left-wing militants, and journalists.**[25] (#note25)**

As in certain groups on the left in the second half of the 1970s, the ground-level fighter was considered the best judge of what action was required. Another left-wing tactic NAR imitated was that of claiming attacks under several different names to give the impression of an ever-multiplying set of terrorist groups.**[26] (#note26)**

NAR began to target other right-wing militants as the right became the target of increasing arrests and militants increasingly cooperated with authorities. It especially targeted the leaders of the group Third Position, whom it believed to have misled and taken advantage of militant youth.**[27] (#note27)**

Major Attacks

1. December 24, 1977: NAR members wounded a leftist student in Rome. (0 killed, 1 wounded).**[28] (#note28)**
2. January 9, 1979: NAR members attacked a left-wing radio station in Rome, wounding five station operators. (0 killed, 5 wounded).**[29] (#note29)**

3. June 23, 1980: NAR members killed an assistant state attorney in Rome. The attorney had been investigating right-wing terrorism. (1 killed).**[30] (#note30)**

4. August 2, 1980: NAR claimed responsibility for a bombing attack on Bologna's central train station. (85 killed, 200 wounded).**[31] (#note31)**

5. October 21, 1981: NAR members killed two police officers in Rome. (2 killed).**[32] (#note32)**

6. August 14, 1988: NAR members unsuccessfully attempted to bomb police headquarters in Milan. (0 killed.).**[33] (#note33)**

Relationships with Other Groups

NAR members, like those of other right-wing groups, were largely disillusioned former members of the Italian right-wing party Italian Social Movement (MSI), particularly its student group University Front for National Action (FUAN).**[34] (#note34)** MSI did not overtly support NAR, though it did encourage youth militancy.**[35] (#note35)** NAR's membership included former members of the right-wing militant groups that had been banned in the mid-1970s.

NAR had wide-ranging contacts with other groups on the right. One of its goals was to unite militant right-wing groups under a single banner, and in that respect NAR resembled Prima Linea (PL), a left wing group that aimed to do the same for militant groups on the left.**[36] (#note36)** It also encouraged other militants not formally affiliated with it to use its name to claim attacks, and itself used the name Popular Revolutionary Movement (MPR).
[37] (#note37) It shared arms with other right-wing groups**[38] (#note38)** and staged joint attacks, most notably with Let's Take Action.

NAR sought to forge alliances with militant groups on the left, at one point offering a formal ceasefire after attacking a left-wing radio station.**[39] (#note39)** It was unsuccessful, however.

NAR began to attack other right-wing militants as the right became the target of increasing arrests and militants increasingly cooperated with authorities. It especially targeted the leaders of the group Third Position, whom it believed to have misled and taken advantage of militant youth.**[40] (#note40)**

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2. **^ (#cite2)** National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2011). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. Incident: 198808140002 Retrieved April 1, 2012 from **http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/IncidentSummary.aspx?gtdid=198808140002 (http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/IncidentSummary.aspx?gtdid=198808140002)**.

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6. **^ (#cite6)** Ferraresi, Franco. *Threats to Democracy.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996. p. 157.

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11. **^ (#cite11)** National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2011). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. Incident: 198808140002 Retrieved April 1, 2012 from **http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/IncidentSummary.aspx?gtdid=198808140002 (http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/IncidentSummary.aspx?gtdid=198808140002)**.

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37. **^ (#cite37)** Pisano, Vittorfranco S. Terrorism and Security : the Italian Experience : Report of the Subcommittee On Security and Terrorism of the Committee On the Judiciary, United States Senate. Washington: U.S. G.P.O., 1984. p. 36. MPR may also have operated as an independent group; since

NAR itself was not a formal structure, and right-wing militants often claimed membership in several groups at once, it is often difficult to distinguish groups from one another.

38. **^ (#cite38)** Ferraresi, Franco. Threats to Democracy. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996. p. 167

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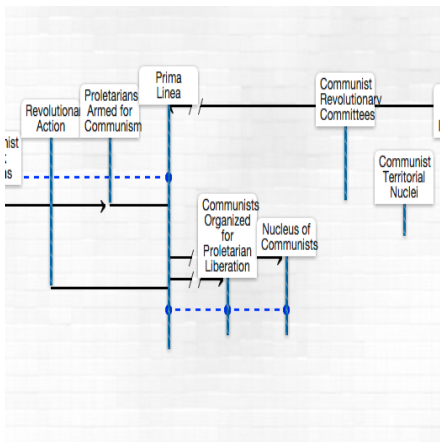
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