



PRESS RELEASE

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## The protagonists in the battle for legality in the South present their testimony

### THE FIGHT AGAINST ORGANISED CRIME IN THE SOUTH OF ITALY BEGINS WITH THE NEW ENTREPRENEURS

It is essential to interrupt the organic relationship between the Mafia, business and the political system.

There is no possibility of recovery for the Riina and Provenzano families.

The market created by criminal organisations is the ultimate undemocratic market. It is fuelled by deep-rooted and widespread links to the business and political world, managing public tenders and state aid and prospering in the grey area where legality and illegality are unclear and contaminate one another. It is thus easy to understand the importance of the evidence given this morning by some of the protagonists in the fight against the Mafia, the Camorra, the 'Ndrangheta and other criminal organisations in the South, which however also have extensive contacts throughout Italy and abroad, in a Festival of Economics dedicated to the subject of "the market and democracy"

"The fight for legality" was the title chosen for this debate, chaired by Nino Amadore, a journalist with "Il Sole 24 Ore", and it lived up to expectations. On the stage the speakers were: Ettore Artioli, who belongs to the management team of Confindustria (the confederation of Italian industry) representing the South, a young businessman who denounced the indifference and even the collusion between the organisation to which he belonged and the Mafia in 1991 when Libero Grassi was killed; Maria Teresa Morano, a Calabrian businesswomen and coordinator of anti-racket associations; Liliana Ferraro, who worked with Falcone and is a protagonist in the fight against the Mafia in Sicily; Michele Prestipino, a magistrate, now in the national anti-Mafia management team, whose work contributed towards the capture of Michele Provenzano.

"A normal country wishes to see a country without rubbish, but above all without the human rubbish represented by the Mafia" began Amadore, who in his job – and with absolute freedom granted by the Editor, he specified – has also written things "that some did not like, but I go on, because those who are afraid die a little every day, those are not afraid can only die once".

"There are plenty of good reasons for stating that the Mafia has everything to do with the economy, because Mafia money seeks new channels every day in order to reach the legal circuit" – continued the journalist, adding that – "the South has failed to have a bourgeois revolution. We

have had a little democracy, but the market has been lacking.” However, a clean market, made up of entrepreneurs who only wish to do their job as they could anywhere in the world, is slowly emerging; this is the major innovation today in Sicily and means that ‘Cosa Nostra’ is losing ground, naturally also thanks to the efforts of the police force. “The 1990s were the years of Mafia terrorist outrages “ - Artioli said – “they hit one person to educate a hundred, to quote the sad slogan of another Italian tragedy. I knew Libero Grassi and his children, we frequented the same places in Palermo. Before his death, for months Confindustria only seemed to wish to keep at a safe distance from him and his declarations. I was only thirty and I still thought the world could be changed for the better: together with many other young entrepreneurs, I manifested my total dissent as regards the behaviour of senior management. However, it was not really their fault. It is necessary to go much further back, when the machinery was set in motion. Today many businesses in Sicily look to the market, rather than just public money, and this is why things are beginning to change. The South must free itself of public money. Sometimes people ask me what I think of the wave of federalism which is sweeping the North: I think it would be a shock for the South, but in the end it would have the effect of setting in motion genuine productive and entrepreneurial energy. For this reason I support the abolition of law 488 (on aid to companies): because we know that the Mafia is very familiar with the systems for transferring the resources set aside by this law into their coffers”.

In Calabria, on the other hand, there is still no sign of this awakening: “Perhaps the production fabric in Calabria is not as strong as it is in Sicily” – said Maria Teresa Morano – “the major companies have still given no sign of change. If you do not follow the rules you are excluded. Businessmen who rebel are unable to work: there is a concrete firm with 50 employees which denounced the racket and which has not sold a single square metre of concrete since, in a region which is redoing the Salerno-Reggio Calabria motorway; the only solution is to leave, but what happens to the workers? This does not mean that one cannot say no. The important thing is to understand the difference between doing it alone, as in the unfortunate case of Libero Grassi, and doing it as part of a group, with an organisation which acts as a shield. This is our role. It is also necessary to deal with the question of sanctions, because those paying protection money, in addition to all the social consequences of his gesture, also profit from unfair competition with honest businessmen.”

Liliana Ferraro recalled the times when the bunker room in Palermo was constructed : “every morning we controlled the lorries coming into the site, checking up on all the number plates, and vehicles with any hint of a connection to the Mafia were not permitted. It was a very long job: we even cleared the sewers because we were afraid that a bomb might arrive via this route. In the end we succeeded in our intent, and afterwards? We thought that Sicily would follow our lead, but this did not happen. We carried out a survey in schools with the Fondazione Falcone: it was found that there was considerable support for the action of the Mafia. This is why I find it extraordinary to see so many young people here at the Festival of Economics in Trento. The tension has diminished here; we have brought Ciampi, Amartya Sen and many others, gathering together no more than 30-40 people. However, don’t tell me that the problem of criminal

organisations only concerns the south of Italy. Where do the profits go? Certainly not to Naples or Palermo: maybe to Los Angeles, where the French Consulate rented its premises in a building belonging to a member of the Italian Mafia, who lived on the French Riviera, enjoying immunity guaranteed by the laws of the country: they didn't believe me in France, then they found out I was right and in the end they finally granted extradition." Finally, as regards the prison regime, Ferraro was clear: "No recovery is possible for people like Riina or Provenzano."

The last speaker was Michele Prestipino, who underlined how the problem lies above all in the "grey area" which runs alongside organised crime. A zone made up of political links (in the 1970s in Sicily, in the era of the "sack of Palermo", Vito Ciancimino), but also economic and financial links. "Today, there is a new phenomenon: 'Cosa Nostra' has lost its power, at least in part, and has suffered some heavy blows. But on the other hand there are the usual old players, those who benefited from their relationships with the Mafia: the temptation, for them, could be to begin to do things on their own, without relying on the direct support of the criminal organisation.

In short, it is necessary to understand that the relationship between criminal organisations and the economic fabric is not only represented by bribes and the famous 3%. The entrepreneur himself often sees advantages from his relationship with the Mafia. For this reason it was extraordinary recently to see people who work and produce coming into action, people who put themselves on the line and not the usual anti-Mafia hot air. However, other categories should also expose themselves: freelance professionals and politicians above all."

