

## **THE FEAR FACTORY**

*by Giorgio Mottola*

*with the contribution of Norma Ferrara - Simona Peluso - Alessia Pelagaggi*

*Video by Alfredo Farina - Davide Fonda*

*Editing by Giorgio Vallati*

### **SIGFRIDO RANUCCI IN STUDIO**

We'll give you the results but only after we drink a mojito: like the one that was enjoyed on a mid-summer day, at a dance club, in the days following the publication of certain recordings. The very recordings that seem to suggest a secret pact between Italians and Russians, with a business meeting that took place at the Hotel Metropol on October 18, 2018. Someone - we still don't know who - recorded these negotiations, aimed at finalising an oil deal that would channel cash into the coffers of the Lega party, still reeling after the scandal of the fraudulent 49 million Euro claim in electoral expenses. Our colleagues at L'Espresso were the first to report on the content of these recordings. Then, American website BuzzFeed released the full unedited tapes. The recordings reveal the presence of Gianluca Savoini, Salvini's former spokesperson, Gianluca Meranda, a lawyer with business ties in Malta who works for London's Euro-IB bank, and a colleague of his, Francesco Vannucci, who's also a former employee of Monte dei Paschi di Siena bank. There were also three Russians. One of them remains unidentified. Then there's Andrey Kharchenko. Kharchenko works for the Russian embassy to Italy, but he's also a high-ranking officer in the political movement that revolves around far-right nationalist Dugin. Then there was Yakunin. Yakunin has ties to a powerful business lawyer and politician close to Putin. The day after the scandal broke, prime minister Conte and the opposition asked Salvini for an explanation. But rather than showing up in Parliament, he went to the beach. Our Giorgio Mottola reports.

### **DJ**

DJ Matteo!

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Here, at the iconic Papeete on Milano Marittima's beach, is where Matteo Salvini sought refuge this summer right after being dragged into the "Metropol" scandal by his former spokesperson, Gianluca Savoini.

### **FIRST AUDIO - GIANLUCA SAVOINI**

Next May are the European elections. We want to change Europe. The new Europe has to be close to Russia, like before. Salvini is the first man who wants to change all of Europe.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

The date is October 18, 2018. Savoini is sitting at a table in Moscow's Hotel Metropol, a few steps away from the Red Square. With the words we just heard, Matteo Salvini's former spokesperson began a long negotiation with three Russian men, involving a 1.5 billion dollar oil deal. They eventually agreed to a very low price, so as to ensure Savoini an extra profit of 65 million dollars. During the negotiations, one of the Russians mentions documents to be shown to a certain "deputy prime minister".

### **SECOND AUDIO - RUSSIAN SPEAKER**

Thanks. Our technical documents have already been prepared and are ready to be delivered to the deputy prime minister.

## **GIANLUCA SAVOINI**

Yes, yes.

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Salvini has always denied any involvement with these interactions, despite having never offered a detailed explanation.

## **MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA PRESS CONFERENCE OF 12 JULY 2019**

Forgive me for being late, I was hiding the last Rubles under the couch of the Ministry, because it's not like 65 million... In fact, we signed an agreement with Italian dance clubs so that this summer you'll be able to pay in Rubles, and you'll get a discount if you pay cash with laundered money of dubious origin.

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Jokes aside, there is one odd coincidence. The night before the meeting, on 17 October 2018, Salvini too was in Moscow. He spoke, in his capacity as interior minister, at an official Confindustria Russia event and even broadcast the event live on his Facebook page.

## **MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

Every time I return to Italy, a few newspapers have fun saying that "Salvini goes to Russia because the Russians are paying him". Nobody's paying me; I come here because I believe the sanctions are madness - economically, socially and culturally.

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Right after the scandal broke, Salvini stated he was unaware of the fact that Savoini, too, was in Moscow during the days of the negotiations. But as you can see from this previously-unreleased video, while the Lega leader was on stage at the Confindustria Russia event, Savoini was just metres away, sitting in the front row.

## **GIUSEPPE CONTE - PRIME MINISTER OF ITALY**

This visit included Deputy Prime Minister Salvini's participation in 2018 General Assembly of Confindustria Russia, which Mr. Savoini too is said to have attended. The events and meetings following the event organised by Confindustria Russia were of a private nature.

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

The private meetings to which the Prime Minister is alluding took place on the 85th floor of a Moscow skyscraper, at the Rusky, one of the most exclusive restaurants in the Russian capital. Here, on 17 October 2018, namely the night before the business meeting at the Metropol, Salvini had a private dinner with Savoini and other people.

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Hi Minister, this is Giorgio Mottola from Report. What did you and Savoini talk about on October 17 at the Rusky?

## **MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

Today is August 3, my friend. Any other questions?

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Yes but today there's also an investigation for international corruption.

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

And the investigation is moving forward.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

You have lied about this matter. Why did you lie about this? You said you didn't know that Savoini was in Moscow?

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

There's an investigation, let the investigators work.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

No, no. You're also the Minister of the Interior. As a minister, you lied publicly: you said you didn't know that...

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

You are being rude. There's an investigation, let the judges do their job.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

You are being reticent. No: I am asking a question...

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

You just called me a liar, a thief, corrupt and reticent.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

No, no: I simply said that you told a lie. You did tell a lie.

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

In a different context...

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What would you do in a different context?

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

You're bothering your colleagues. Your colleagues would say: "Can we ask questions too?"

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

But you publicly lied. You said you knew nothing about Moscow. Instead Savoini... We're talking about international corruption.

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

My friend...

**TG2 OPERATOR**

OK you asked your question, that's enough!

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

Your colleagues here are...

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

But you didn't answer the question. If we all were journalists here, we'd all be asking the same question.

## **SIGFRIDO RANUCCI IN STUDIO**

Four days later, Salvini started the government crisis. And the "Moscopoli" case ended up on the back burner. At any rate, the scheme meant to channel fresh cash into the Lega's bank accounts was to be as follows: a state company like Rosneft or Gazprom would have sold oil to a company connected to ENI. However, it wouldn't have been a direct sale. And both Italian and Russian middle men would have kept a percentage of the total amount. A clean 4% would have ended up in the account of a company controlled by Gianluca Savoini. Namely about 65 million dollars, which so far have never been found. But according to the Milan magistrates who are investigating the matter on suspicion of international corruption, the money would have been used to "fund the Lega's electoral campaign for the European elections" ENI has asked us to "clearly state that we have nothing to do with this, we are not involved." Done. Gianluca Savoini, instead, pleaded the right to silence. Salvini, called to answer of this in Parliament, did not offer an explanation. And the question remains: Did Salvini know what Savoini was doing at that precise moment, and what was on the table at that meeting? What did Savoini mean when he said "We want to change Europe and bring it closer to Russia. Salvini is the first"?

There are two possibilities: either Savoini was orchestrating a massive scam by improperly using the Deputy Prime Minister's name, unbeknownst to Salvini who should therefore distance himself and sue, or else Savoini (whom we've been investigating for over a year) is merely a piece in a much larger puzzle - a puzzle that stretches far beyond this bribe money which, by the way, has still not been found. A puzzle where ghosts from a recent past seem to be conspiring to recreate that past. Where an ocean of money - one billion between rubles and dollars, as verified by our Giorgio Mottola - is fuelling a fear factory designed to bring about the implosion of the European Union. While also attempting to undermine the Bergoglio papacy. This would justify the awkward pauses, the embarrassment, the lies. Tonight, we'll tell you the secret history of Savoini and Salvini's relationship. Starting from an alleged scam that Salvini tried to pull at the newspaper he worked for. At least according to the paper's director.

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Salvini and Savoini's relationship goes way back, and has shaped the very fate and identity of the Lega. To understand the origins of this mysterious relationship, we need to go back twenty years to the days of "La Padania", the newspaper directed by Gigi Moncalvo where they both worked and where they first met.

## **GIGI MONCALVO – DIRECTOR OF LA PADANIA 2002-2004**

I twice asked that he be fired. The first time, I kept an eye on him in the holiday period between Christmas and New Year's. If you work during those days, you can make a lot of money, up to three times the regular day's pay.

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

And was he there?

## **GIGI MONCALVO – DIRECTOR OF LA PADANIA 2002-2004**

He was not there, nor was he reachable where he said he would be. Then I saw the monthly attendance sheet and he had marked himself "present". The second time, he submitted four false expense reports.

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Did you ever confront Salvini about his absenteeism or his fraudulent expense reports?

## **GIGI MONCALVO – DIRECTOR OF LA PADANIA 2002-2004**

Of course. And he answered abruptly, "you're going, I'm here to stay. And I'll become more and more powerful".

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

If Salvini was seldom seen around the office, Gianluca Savoini had a major role at the newspaper. A member of the editorial board, he had his reign in this office, the political newsroom.

### **GIGI MONCALVO – DIRECTOR OF LA PADANIA 2002-2004**

Savoini was the king of that room, the leading figure. He possessed a certain charisma and strength, ostentatiously smoking that cigar in his dark suit. Not once did I see him take off his jacket, even on the hottest days. I never ever saw him in shirt sleeves: always with that "uniform", like a Brezhnev-era soviet official.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

During their years at La Padania, Salvini and Savoini's relationship grew stronger. To the point that when the former deputy prime minister became the Lega's leader in 2013, he named Savoini as his spokesperson. We see evidence in this 2013 video, found in the RAI archives: it's Salvini's first press conference as party secretary. And look who's behind him: Gianluca Savoini.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

How was the relationship between Salvini and Savoini?

### **GIGI MONCALVO – DIRECTOR OF LA PADANIA 2002-2004**

I would say they were authentic partners in crime, so to speak. Savoini, whom I suspect was lying, was always boasting about having powerful connections and knowing people all around the world. He exuded this cultural aura, which was precisely what Salvini lacked.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Why did Salvini choose Savoini as his spokesperson?

### **GIGI MONCALVO – DIRECTOR OF LA PADANIA 2002-2004**

Because he owed him a lot. Savoini shaped Salvini, he created him. He literally moulded him, as if he were a lump of clay.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Although his involvement was never publicly disclosed, Savoini was at the centre of a 2002 scandal after La Stampa reported on the presence of swastikas and Nazi images in the headquarters of La Padania. The room at the heart of the scandal is where Gianluca Savoini had his desk. Claudio Gatti has unearthed the original pictures.

### **CLAUDIO GATTI - AUTHOR OF "SALVINI'S DEMONS"**

One of these images is a colour photo of Savoini and a colleague, with Hitler's face in the lower left corner. Then there's the photo of an Italian SS official. There's this picture of the Gestapo symbol, reinterpreted in a Padanian version. And we can also see the Runic insignia that inspired Nazis scribbled in black on the desktop computer.

### **GIGI MONCALVO – DIRECTOR OF LA PADANIA 2002-2004**

Savoini tried claiming it was "just a joke, something done in jest".

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Was Savoini a Nazi sympathiser?

**GIGI MONCALVO – DIRECTOR OF LA PADANIA 2002-2004**

When he ran into someone in the hallway, I would hear him snap his heels and say “kameradschaft”. I’d take a peek and there he was, saluting someone.

**GIANLUCA SAVOINI**

I’m especially happy to be in this room, because here I see the true Germany, the true Europe.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

In Gianluca Savoini's political background, and behind his strong fondness for Russia, there is a key figure from Italy's “Years of Lead”: Maurizio Murelli, a staple of Milan's neo-fascist scene since the 1980s.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

You are one of the last “evil masters” of Italy's far right.

**MAURIZIO MURELLI - FOUNDER OF ORION**

Two terms I don’t identify with. I’m not a master and I’m not far-right.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

But you are evil?

**MAURIZIO MURELLI - FOUNDER OF ORION**

Extremely evil, if nothing else for having spent 11 years in the evil house, also known as prison.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Murelli spent eleven years in prison for felony murder, after police agent Antonio Marino was killed by a hand grenade during a street protest in 1973. Upon his release from prison, Murelli founded Orion, a cultural centre that combines neo-Nazi and pro-Soviet ideas, championing the birth of a new Eurasian continent under the leadership of Russia. One of Orion’s disciples was Gianluca Savoini.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Was Savoini among those who were enamoured with the activities of the Orion group?

**MAURIZIO MURELLI - FOUNDER OF ORION**

I believe he strongly identified with the ideas that we were developing. In the videos of him at Lombardia Russia events, in his speeches, I detect many of the ideas and theories that we explore.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Another point in common between Murelli and Savoini is the Lega. In the early 90s, Maurizio Murelli directed all the leading figures of the Orion group towards Bossi's party, in pursuit of a specific political strategy.

**CLAUDIO GATTI - AUTHOR OF “SALVINI’S DEMONS”**

Its goal - as I was told by a person who took part in those meetings - was to extrapolate the essence of fascism and especially of Nazism in order to revitalize it. Eventually we started to see the first signs, with the birth of the various Leagues in Lombardy, Piedmont and Veneto. Murelli sensed they were an empty shell in need of a soul.

**MAURIZIO MURELLI - FOUNDER OF ORION**

I was among those who sensed the Lega's potential for development. That whole scene was culturally weak, but it had a diverse and interesting potential for growth.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Were you promoting cultural hegemony.

**MAURIZIO MURELLI - FOUNDER OF ORION**

We tried. It would be a stretch, in order to promote culturally hegemony you have to be the RAI. You throw seeds into the wind: some fall on fertile ground and blossom, others do not.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

One of the seeds that blossomed was precisely Savoini, who in 2013 became Salvini's closest adviser. That is when Salvini initiated the Lega's metamorphosis: from a separatist, anti-southern movement to a nationalist party with radical views that appealed to Italian neo-fascists. We see important evidence of this in a 2015 campaign rally that Salvini held alongside the leader of Casapound, the neo-fascist organisation which Maurizio Murelli has openly called "his children".

**SIMONE DI STEFANO - VICEPRESIDENT OF CASAPOUND**

They keep asking us - even today as we were on our way: "Why? Why are you joining forces with Matteo Salvini, with the Lega? Why is a Roman on stage with the Lega Nord? Because we agree with every single word of Matteo Salvini's programme!"

**MAURIZIO MURELLI - FOUNDER OF ORION**

Salvini has managed to nail down a language and certain keywords that have appeal and staying power.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

But where did he get these words and these ideas from?

**MAURIZIO MURELLI - FOUNDER OF ORION**

Well, they are basically inherited from the language we used back then.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So do you believe that, at least at this historical juncture, some of those seeds have found fertile ground?

**MAURIZIO MURELLI - FOUNDER OF ORION**

Yes, but the best ones are yet to blossom, and they will soon.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Apparently, some of those seeds must have blossomed in Russia too. Indeed, it is thanks to Maurizio Murelli that Gianluca Savoini met Aleksandr Dugin , the controversial Russian philosopher who may have had a role in the Metropol negotiations.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Have you known Gianluca Savoini for a long time?

**ALEKSANDR DUGIN - FOUNDER OF THE NATIONAL BOLSHEVIK PARTY**

Yes, he's a journalist of the traditionalist school, very good in my opinion.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Since 1992?

**ALEKSANDR DUGIN - FOUNDER OF THE NATIONAL BOLSHEVIK PARTY**

Yes, yes, yes. When he visited Russia for the first time.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Long considered one of the leading ideologists of the Putin doctrine, Dugin is the founder of the National Bolshevik Party, whose symbol is a Nazi flag with a sickle and hammer in place of the swastika. With Salvini's rise to power, Dugin's relations with Savoini and Murelli became once again very intense. This photo was taken last year in the restaurant managed by Rainaldo Graziani, son of Clemente Graziani, the founder of the neo-fascist movement Ordine Nuovo. Murelli and Savoini are sitting at the same table, not far from Dugin, who on the occasion was presented with a Yule lantern. A symbolic artefact of Celtic origins, which SS chief Himmler introduced into Nazi ceremonies.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

This is where you held the ceremony for Dugin in December?

**RAINALDO GRAZIANI - ORDINE NUOVO STUDY CENTER**

In December we... It wasn't a ceremony, it was a seminar, a meeting... You mean where the girl presented him with that solstice lantern?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

The Yule lantern.

**RAINALDO GRAZIANI - ORDINE NUOVO STUDY CENTER**

It's very popular today, but not for that reason. All forms of spiritualism...

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Everyone sort of links it to Nazi rituals.

**RAINALDO GRAZIANI - ORDINE NUOVO STUDY CENTER**

No, only those like you, or like me, who read up on things.

**SIGFRIDO RANUCCI IN STUDIO**

Memory is a bit like the tide. When you least expect it, it brings back to the surface pieces of a wreckage. One piece was unearthed by Director Moncalvo, when he told us about Salvini's absenteeism, and the false expense reports he submitted when he worked for La Padania. Which is a bit like stealing from taxpayers, since at the time La Padania benefited from 4 million Euro in public funding. Then, when Moncalvo threatened to fire him, Salvini replied: "You're going, I'm here to stay. And believe me, I'll be more powerful than you." Did he have a crystal ball or a guardian angel? Moncalvo believes that someone who played a part was Savoini, the man who walked the hallways snapping his heels and saluting colleagues like a Nazi. It was just a joke, he said. But then we find him at the cultural centre founded by the neo-fascist Maurizio Murelli, Orion, which explored the ideas of nazi-fascism and longed for a Eurasian continent under Russian hegemony. It was precisely Murelli who introduced Savoini to the ultra-nationalist sovereignist Dugin, the one who last year at a dinner in Milan was presented with the Yule lantern, a Nazi symbol. But why did Murelli infiltrate the Lega? Because he deemed it the weakest culturally: culture as a bridle. And what about Salvini? When he was accused of veering too close to nazi-fascist views, he refuted the claims. But



Report has found a survey commissioned by the Lega in 2017, which has remained secret until today. Salvini was feeling out his voter base with regard to nazi-fascism. What emerges is that between 45 and 71% of respondents think that nazi-fascist ideas should not be repressed, that it's not a problem, and that they do not fear a return of nazi-fascism. Now we ask: is the jury really still out on the horror that killed ten million people between Jews, Roma, Ukrainians, Poles, Sinti and homosexuals, and which lead to gas chambers, mass executions and the massacres in Marzabotto, Sant'Anna di Stazzema, Fosse Ardeatine? Is such a horror material for a survey? Sure enough, they chose not to publish the results. But those results emboldened Salvini, to the point that he gave a speech from the same balcony, in Forlì, where Mussolini had stood. And he offered his solidarity to the owners of that beach resort which proudly displayed Nazi symbols. But does Salvini really miss the days of Nazi-Fascism? No. It's just political opportunism. He knows he can count on those votes, on those seeds sown by Murelli, which enabled him to show up at the court of the most controversial Russian oligarchs, who may have played a part in the dealings at the Metropol.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

This other image is even more telling. These are Dugin and Savoini in front of the Metropol on the morning of October 18, 2018. The same day of the meeting for the maxi-bribe. No direct involvement of the Russian philosopher has ever been proven, but according to Buzzfeed, one the men discussing the deal with Savoini at the Metropol was Andrey Karchenko, which some official Russian news sources indicate as an employee in Aleksandr Dugin's political movement.

### **ALEKSANDR DUGIN - FOUNDER OF THE NATIONAL BOLSHEVIK PARTY**

I don't have time to track what my friend Gianluca Savoini is doing in Russia.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Because Savoini has often been to Russia asking for funding for the Lega. Did you know this?

### **ALEKSANDR DUGIN - FOUNDER OF THE NATIONAL BOLSHEVIK PARTY**

I did not. I am a philosopher, I hate money. It doesn't interest me at all.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

In recent years, Dugin has become one of the leading demagogues of European sovereignty. The Russian philosopher calls for the end of liberal democracy and longs, in his words, for the rise of a radical populism and an illiberal revolution. If Dugin's political reference in Russia is Putin, in Western Europe it's Matteo Salvini.

### **ALEKSANDR DUGIN - FOUNDER OF THE NATIONAL BOLSHEVIK PARTY**

I have great respect for Salvini. There's an organic correspondence between his views and mine.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

But when was the first time you met Matteo Salvini?

### **ALEKSANDR DUGIN - FOUNDER OF THE NATIONAL BOLSHEVIK PARTY**

A few years ago, when he was already the Lega leader.

### **ALEKSANDR DUGIN - FOUNDER OF THE NATIONAL BOLSHEVIK PARTY**

And who introduced you?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Some friends.

**ALEKSANDR DUGIN - FOUNDER OF THE NATIONAL BOLSHEVIK PARTY**

Like Gianluca Savoini?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Yes.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

The kindred views of Dugin and Salvini also emerged during a rare interview given to the controversial philosopher on Russian TV in 2016.

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

Italy has always been a slave to the European Union, to Brussels. Its politics have been dictated by someone else. And aside from economic considerations, it seems to me that certain ethical themes - like the importance of religion, of tradition and of languages - are now regaining prominence, thanks in part to the many young people who care about these things.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

The interview was broadcast on Tsargrad TV, whose director at the time was Dugin. It is a militant news channel espousing ultra-conservative and ultra-traditionalist views. Its owner is Konstantin Malofeev, a Tsarist nostalgic and Putin supporter. He is the owner of Marshall Capital, an investment fund worth over 1 billion dollars. Malofeev is one of the richest and most powerful Russian oligarchs.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Mister Malofeev, is it fair to call you an oligarch?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

No, that is not correct: thanks to President Putin, there are no more oligarchs. I prefer to call myself a philanthropist.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Although Malofeev calls himself a philanthropist, in 2014 he was included in the EU black list of unwanted people. Since then, he's been banned from entering the Schengen area, his accounts at European banks have been frozen, and heavy sanction have been introduced for anyone who does business with him. But none of this has stopped Matteo Salvini from flying repeatedly to Moscow in recent years to meet with the philanthropic oligarch.

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

I like Matteo Salvini. The first time I met him I was very impressed. Matteo is different from all other politicians I've met. He has very strong ideas.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

When did you last meet him.

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

Shortly before he became deputy prime minister.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

It's a relationship that goes way back, to at least 2013. When Salvini was elected Lega secretary, everyone was very surprised when they saw a Russian man step onto the stage and give a speech. His name was Alexey Komov, and almost nobody knew him or had ever heard of him.

**ALEXEY KOMOV**

Hello Lega Nord! Hello Turin! We are your brothers in Russia, we champion your same values of a Christian Europe.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Thanks to Malofeev, we finally figured out the story behind that mysterious presence.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

When did you meet Salvini for the first time?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

Many years ago.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

In 2013?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

I was supposed to go to the convention when he was elected.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Had you been invited?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

Yes, but I was unable to go, because I had other commitments.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So Komov was there on your behalf?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

Yes.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Considering such close relations with a figure as controversial and mysterious as Malofeev, we went to the Pontida gathering and tried asking the Lega leader himself about him.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Salvini, may I ask you why in 2013 you invited Konstantin Malofeev to the Lega convention?

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

My friend, does this look like the place for an interview?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

I mean, you're taking selfies. While doing that, you could also answer my question.

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

Exactly, I'm taking selfies. Please.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

I understand, but you could still answer me while you do that.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Since the selfie ritual is sacred, to get an answer I got in line with everyone else.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

I waited for my turn. Why so many meetings with Konstantin Malofeev? What did you discuss?

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

Who?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What do you mean, who? Malofeev. Konstantin Malofeev. The Russian oligarch.

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

Ah.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

You invited him to the Lega Nord convention in 2013, when you got elected. Why?

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

Yes.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Why?

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

Huh?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Why? Do you not understand the question? Am I speaking Italian?

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

No, you're speaking Italian. If you wish, we can talk about this some other time.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

When can we talk about it?

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

Whenever you want. This just doesn't seem like the place.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So you don't remember Malofeev?

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

No, I do, I remember the name. But you're asking about 2103... With all due respect, it's 2019 now...

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

But you met with him many other times.

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

I meet tons of people.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

In Russia, in Moscow, multiple times.

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

In Russia, in Thailand, in New Zealand, in Nepal, I meet tons of people. If you wish, I's be happy to try and piece together what happened six years ago.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So we'll get in touch with your assistant and you'll grant us an interview?

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

Maybe not wearing a T-shirt in a field.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

OK, deal. So it's a promise.

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

Thanks. Good luck with your work.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Thanks.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Unfortunately, Salvini did not keep his promise and never granted us an interview. It's a shame, it would have been interesting to ask him why relations between Salvini's and Malofeev's circles intensified so quickly after he was elected Party secretary. Just a few months after the convention, his spokesperson Gianluca Savoini founded the association Lombardia Russia. And who did he appoint as its president? Malofeev's man, Alexey Komov.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Are you the president of Lombardia Russia?

**ALEXEY KOMOV - HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE LOMBARDIA RUSSIA ASSOCIATION**

When Savoini asked me to become honorary president I immediately said yes. They needed a Russian who represented the ultra-conservative and traditionalist Russian world, so I said yes, but I have no idea what Savoini or the association do.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Did you play a part in Gianluca Savoini's negotiations at the Hotel Metropol?

**ALEXEY KOMOV - HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE LOMBARDIA RUSSIA ASSOCIATION**

No, I know absolutely nothing of that. I read about it in the papers.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

While Komov says he knows nothing of what happened at the Metropol, the one who did provide some pieces to the puzzle, surprisingly, was Malofeev himself.

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

I asked Savoini: "What's this I hear about the Metropol?" And he replied: "Nothing, I spoke to some lawyers, they said they wanted to talk about some business involving oil". "So?" "Nothing, we talked about oil and how I could have helped them with ENI".

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So he confirmed that these negotiations took place.

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

He confirmed that he met with the Russians and started discussing oil with them.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Savoini spoke with you, but he pleaded the right to silence with Italian magistrates.

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

I'm not a magistrate.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

However, there apparently had been other negotiations before the Metropol. In their "Black Book of the Lega", journalists Vergine and Tizian state that, before the Metropol meeting, Savoini had entered negotiations for an oil deal with Avanguard Oil and Gas, a company based in the same building as Malofeev's companies.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Do you know this company?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

I really do not want to talk about this company. Why do you waste your time chasing such unimportant facts? Use your time more wisely!

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Report has discovered that Avanguard's offices in the same building as Malofeev may be much more than a coincidence. Our documents indicate that 1% of the company is owned directly by Malofeev, while the remaining 99% is owned by a company headed by one of his employees.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Have Salvini and Savoini ever asked you for money for the Lega?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

No, I told you. For the past 5 years, I haven't funded anyone in Europe due to the sanctions, and I don't want to get them in trouble.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Before the sanctions, however, Malofeev proved to be very generous with European right-wing parties: he helped neo-fascist politician Jean-Marie Le Pen obtain a 2-million Euro loan through a Cypriot company, and according to accusations in France, he also helped Marine Le Pen's National Front party obtain a 9.4 million Euro loan through a Russian bank.

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

No, that is not true.

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

And what about her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen: did you fund him?

## **KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

In that case, yes. But there's a big difference: that was before the sanctions.

## **SIGFRIDO RANUCCI IN STUDIO**

In this exclusive interview, Malofeev said that negotiations at the Metropol did indeed take place. It's an important testimony: he was told by Savoini himself, who instead refuses to speak to Italian magistrates. Perhaps the purported funds destined to the Lega would have helped channel those populist ideas of a new Russian hegemony. This would justify Savoini's on-tape comments on needing to change Europe, bringing it closer to Russia, and that Salvini is the first one to want such a thing. We mustn't forget that Savoini was speaking in the presence of Karchenko, a member of the sovereignist ultra-nationalist movement founded by Dugin. The Lega has been infiltrated by Russians since 2013. Malofeev himself said "I was supposed to take part in the Lega's first convention, Salvini had invited me, but I couldn't go so I sent Komov." But why had Salvini invited Malofeev? When Giorgio asked him, he was unable to hide his embarrassment. Savoini and Malofeev have a close relationship. Even before the Metropol meeting, he tried to do business with the Russian oligarch, through a company called Avanguard Oil and Gas, which, as Report has discovered, is controlled by Malofeev, who appears to be the patron of all right-wing parties aiming to overthrow Europe. He even financed the one in France controlled by the Le Pen family. Then he said "I funded them up until the sanctions. Afterwards, I never funded anyone again" because Europe levied sanctions against him for allegedly bankrolling war efforts in Crimea. But he may have found a way around it. Giorgio Mottola has discovered Malofeev's secret agenda and his meetings with powerful American foundations, the right-wing religious and ultra-conservative ones. They seem to have struck a sort of holy alliance, which dished out one billion dollars - and this figure has been verified by Giorgio - to fund various entities with the goal of making Europe implode. So much money, in fact, that we started seeing rosaries in the hands of people who had never previously seemed especially devout.

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

His international political agenda is based on a close collaboration between Russia and United States. It's no surprise that in Washington the Right Wing Watch, a leading research centre on the far-right, has been monitoring Malofeev for years.

## **PETER MONTGOMERY – SENIOR FELLOW RIGHT WING WATCH**

Malofeev is "God's oligarch". He contributes millions of dollars every year to the St. Basil the Great foundation, through which he hopes to reach his ultimate goal: make Russia the beacon of Christianity throughout the world.

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

St. Basil the Great is the richest and most powerful Russian foundation. Malofeev, God's oligarch, pumps tens of millions of Euro into it each year. He uses the foundation for charity activities, but mostly to fight the enemies of Christianity. Starting from the Gay Mafia.

## **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What is the Gay Mafia? Who's part of it?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

No, I do not use this word. I use the word "sodomites".

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Sodomites??

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

Or I can use the word "pederast".

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Don't you think that's a bit offensive?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

As a Christian, I demand to use this word and I believe that these people really need to calm down. Why must Europe become a land of sodomites?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What is their agenda? What are their goals?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

They want to promote their abnormality. If there were no "Gay Pride" events, men would never be attracted to other men.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So the danger is that they will make us all gay?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

Not everyone, but more and more people.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

But gay lobbies are not the only enemies who pose a threat to the Christian roots of Russia and Europe.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

In your ideal world, what is the role of women?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

Their role is to be loved by their husbands. Only unhappy and unloved women become feminists. And we must provide them with enough money. That way, they wouldn't want to work and they would stay at home. Only women who embrace their role as housewives and mothers can put a stop to the population decline.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Does Salvini share these values?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

Of course. His speech in Verona was magnificent.

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

**VERONA – 30 March 2019 – WORLD CONGRESS OF FAMILIES**

I'm fascinated by these purported feminists who protest for a fee. If I were a woman, I'd be embarrassed... I think there's an organised tourism business behind this. I mean,



I'll go to Verona for a bit, then to Genoa, then to Palermo. Always the same people, saying the same things, with the same signs.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

As his trips to Russia got more frequent, Salvini's public religiosity seemed to undergo a profound transformation.

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA  
MILANO – 18 MAY 2019 – "PRIMA L'ITALIA" RALLY**

And I personally entrust Italy, my life and your lives to the immaculate heart of the Mary, and I am certain she will lead us to victory.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Then came social media posts about the Virgin Mary, a slew of religious symbols, and many crosses kissed in public. All the way to his public endorsement of the World Congress of Families, last March in Verona.

**MATTEO SALVINI - FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE LEGA**

If it's lame to talk about mum, dad and kids, while calling oneself a Christian or a Catholic, then I am proud to be lame.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

The World Congress of Families, which Salvini endorsed, is an international advocacy group that opposes abortion and gay marriage.

Its president is an American, Brian Brown, and his vice-president is an old acquaintance of ours, Alexey Komov. The organisation has been around for over 20 years, but it was Konstantin Malofeev who revitalised it in 2013. That's the year when God's oligarch secretly travelled to the US to meet with the leaders of the Religious Right, alongside Alexey Komov.

**ALEXEY KOMOV - HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE LOMBARDIA RUSSIA ASSOCIATION**

All I did was help out a bit. But I can assure you that money had nothing to do with it.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

In fact, he helped out more than a bit. Thanks to this email which Komov sent Malofeev, which we found in the database of the OCCRP Consortium, we were able to piece together Malofeev's full schedule of meetings in the US. In Washington, he met with Republican congressmen like Chris Smith, representatives from the Family Research Council, one of the leading American anti-abortion organisations, Nation for Marriage, which is led by World Congress for Families president Brian Brown, and representatives of the Heritage Foundation and the Leadership Institute, two of the most powerful Republican foundations.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What was the subject of these meetings?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

We talked about how families can be shielded from the totalitarian sodomite agenda that is taking hold all around the world.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So was that when the Holy Alliance was born?

**KONSTANTIN MALOFEEV - FOUNDER OF MARSHALL CAPITAL**

Yes, the idea was born there.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

The Holy Alliance of the World Congress of Families gathered a few months later, in 2014, in Moscow, for the first international ultra-conservative convention organised by Malofeev. The Americans participated even though Crimea had been invaded a few months earlier, and both the US and Europe had levied sanctions against Russia and God's oligarch.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Was it Malofeev who paid for the Moscow Forum?

**ALEXEY KOMOV - HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE LOMBARDIA RUSSIA ASSOCIATION**

I can just say that Malofeev and his foundation St. Basil the Great were major contributors.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Looking through the list of invitees at the 2014 Moscow Forum, we notice a significant Italian presence. The largest delegation was sent by the Pro Vita association lead by Toni Brandi.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Were there lots of Italians at the Moscow Forum?

**TONI BRANDI - PRESIDENT OF PRO VITA ASSOCIATION**

Maybe ten, or fifteen. Ah, that one.. about large families, or something like that.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

All paid by the Russians. Great hospitality.

**TONI BRANDI - PRESIDENT OF PRO VITA ASSOCIATION**

No, that's not true. They just paid for the hotel.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

And the flight.

**TONI BRANDI - PRESIDENT OF PRO VITA ASSOCIATION**

OK, I can't remember now.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

The Pro Vita association has made a name for itself in recent years with its "shockvertising" campaigns against abortion and gay marriage. Its spokesperson is Alessandro Fiore, son of Forza Nuova leader Roberto Fiore. Until a few years ago, the organisation's newsletter was distributed by Rapida Vis, a company registered to the sons of the Forza Nuova boss.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

About your relationship with Roberto Fiore, is Pro Vita a front group for Forza Nuova?

**TONI BRANDI - PRESIDENT OF PRO VITA ASSOCIATION**

My son, you have such a nice clean face, why do you say such nonsense? See how polite I'm being? I said "nonsense".

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

His son, Alessandro Fiore, is the group's spokesperson.

**TONI BRANDI - PRESIDENT OF PRO VITA ASSOCIATION**

He's the campaign director. So what?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

The editor of the Pro Vita newsletter, before it was purchased by the group, was a company called MP owned by one Beniamino Iannace, another Forza Nuova member.

**TONI BRANDI - PRESIDENT OF PRO VITA ASSOCIATION**

So what does any of this mean?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

There are lots of links to Forza Nuova.

**TONI BRANDI - PRESIDENT OF PRO VITA ASSOCIATION**

Ok, I suppose...

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So I am asking you, is it a Forza Nuova front group? Do you share...

**TONI BRANDI - PRESIDENT OF PRO VITA ASSOCIATION**

No, that's not true.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Are you the drive belt of Forza Nuova in the pro-life movement?

**TONI BRANDI - PRESIDENT OF PRO VITA ASSOCIATION**

Respectfully, find one photograph where I can be seen in public talking to Roberto Fiore and you'll be right.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

We did better than a photograph. Toni Brandi is in the Pro Vita T-shirt, and next to him is Roberto Fiore. The footage comes from a documentary called "Sodoma", commissioned by Russian anti-gay groups.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

It seems difficult to try and deny this close connection between yourself and the Pro Vita association. There's the business aspects, your son, and then...

**ROBERTO FIORE – FORZA NUOVA PARTY SECRETARY**

We share the same ideas.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

You share the same ideas?

**ROBERTO FIORE – FORZA NUOVA PARTY SECRETARY**

Of course.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Were you part of the Pro Vita delegation at the 2014 forum for families in Russia?

**ROBERTO FIORE – FORZA NUOVA PARTY SECRETARY**

In Russia? Yes, I was there.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So you also know Konstantin Malofeev?

**ROBERTO FIORE – FORZA NUOVA PARTY SECRETARY**

I know Konstantin Malofeev.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Have you met with him many times?

**ROBERTO FIORE – FORZA NUOVA PARTY SECRETARY**

I've met with him.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

It wasn't just a meeting: in this email from the OCCRP database, Alexey Komov, Malofeev's man, calls Roberto Fiore "our pro-Russian friend from Italy". And Fiore turned to Komov when he needed to find a lawyer for a neo-fascist leader who'd been arrested in Greece

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

There's this email where you're asking for a lawyer to be sent to Athens because...

**ROBERTO FIORE – FORZA NUOVA PARTY SECRETARY**

Of course. We believe that Russia has a major role in the world, with its juridical culture, its history, and the crusades for liberties that Russia is currently sponsoring throughout the world.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So Komov was right when you called you their "pro-Russian friend from Italy"?

**ROBERTO FIORE – FORZA NUOVA PARTY SECRETARY**

Absolutely.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

In addition to offering political support, Russia also channelled loads of money into Italy's pro-life scene. Three accounts in Eastern Europe, linked to companies in Azerbaijan and Russia, sent over 2 million Euro to Luca Volonté's Novae Terrae Foundation. Volonté is a former UDC congressman who, together with Alexey Komov, serves on the board of the Howard Center, a foundation chaired by Brian Brown which organises the World Congress of Families. Starting in 2015, they were joined on the board of Novae Terrae by Lega senator Simone Pillon.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Even after the investigation began...

**SIMONE PILLON - SENATOR (LEGA)**

Excuse me. So, what's up, Putin?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Senator, you're making a joke of this...

**SIMONE PILLON - SENATOR (LEGA)**

You guys are the joke!

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

We're the joke?

**SIMONE PILLON - SENATOR (LEGA)**

You have to spread filth onto everything you touch.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Us? Or the foundations that receive money from offshore companies?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

In 2015, Luca Volonté was indicted on charges of international corruption for the offshore money received by Novae Terrae. But his foundation continues to receive money. Just not from the East, but from the West. Donors include the American foundations friendly with Malofeev, like the National Organisation for Marriage and the Home School Legal Defence, and especially Patrick Slim, the son of Carlos Slim, the world's fifth richest man. These donations were made around the time when Senator Pillon joined the foundation, but he has nothing to do with the investigation focussing on Volonté.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

First: how was this money used? Second: why did you receive so much money from abroad?

**SIMONE PILLON - SENATOR (LEGA)**

The pro-life and pro-family world world is a beautiful reality which, thank God, is not just in Italy, and evidently self-funding methods are working.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Since pro-life groups are pursuing a very specific political agenda, which is changing legislation in our country...

**SIMONE PILLON - SENATOR (LEGA)**

Excuse me, what is your goal? Are you trying to say "Pillon is a bad guy", and "I was wrong, he's not getting roubles, he's getting dollars"?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

I am just listing you a series of wire transfers, all made from foreign organisations.

**SIMONE PILLON - SENATOR (LEGA)**

Your goal is very clear. Thanks for the question. All money received by the associations comes from perfectly legal operations, at least during the time when I was there. If you have evidence to the contrary, make your accusation and I'll file my defamation suit. Alright?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Sure, but the point is: why did Patrick Slim, one of the world's richest men, at one point...

**SIMONE PILLON - SENATOR (LEGA)**

Ask the Novae Terrae Foundation, why are you asking me?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

But you were on their board of directors, senator.

**SIMONE PILLON - SENATOR (LEGA)**

Ask the Novae Terrae Foundation.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Who exactly do I ask?

**SIMONE PILLON - SENATOR (LEGA)**

At this time, I in no way represent.. Actually, I didn't even represent them before.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

But while you were there, they were receiving money from Patrick Slim.

**SIMONE PILLON - SENATOR (LEGA)**

I repeat, bring me evidence of the funding you speak of, not those notes scribbled on that piece of toilet paper, and then I'll answer you...

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

That's my planner, senator, have some respect.

**SIMONE PILLON - SENATOR (LEGA)**

Sorry, that piece of planner paper.

**SIGFRIDO RANUCCI IN STUDIO**

Even a planner page can be a bit rough if it contains evidence of wire transfers made by the National Organization for Marriage and by Patrick Slim, as Giorgio was mentioning. About 75 thousand Euro. It remains to be seen how they were spent, but Pillon didn't wish to talk about that. He's the Lega senator known for his controversial and hotly-debated family law bill, and for his positions against abortion and gay rights. At any rate, what we found out in our investigations is that Malofeev, God's oligarch, has offered support, in various ways, to Salvini's Lega, to Forza Nuova's leader Fiore, and to the head of the Pro Vita organisation Brandi. And while scouring the database of the OCCRP journalistic consortium, Giorgio found evidence of Malofeev's meetings with executives from the powerful American foundation of the ultra-religious right. These organisations are so powerful that, for the first time in history, the majority of US states are now passing or about to pass laws against abortion. In Alabama it's already been enacted: abortion is now illegal even if a woman becomes pregnant following incest or rape. And in those same foundations, together with Malofeev we also found the donors who funded Trump's campaign, and the ones who funded Cambridge Analytica, that company which broke into 50 million Facebook accounts and is said to have influenced the outcome of the presidential elections as well as Brexit. This Holy Alliance, these foundations are a bit like revolving doors at hotels: anonymous donations come in and are redistributed to other foundations and organisations, like the far-right ultra-religious movements which have been sponsoring anti-abortion and anti-gay rights campaigns, to make European culture feel threatened. In other words, to power an enormous fear factory. One billion dollars, as Giorgio has found, of documented funding. A few pennies even ended up in the pockets of an old friend of ours.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Between 2012 and 2016, Novae Terrae wired funds to numerous associations of the ultra-traditionalist pro-life world, like "Citizen Go", specialized in campaigns against gay marriage; the Iona Institute, famous for its anti-abortion campaigns; the Papaboys; the French foundation Manif Pour Tous; the American Sutherland Institute and especially Benjamin Harnwell's Dignitatis Humanae Institute, which is linked to Steve Bannon, the former White House chief strategist who after helping Trump win the election came to Italy and began meeting with party leaders like Giorgia Meloni, whom he offered to support.

### **STEVE BANNON – FORMER WHITE HOUSE CHIEF STRATEGIST**

I can help you win the upcoming European elections. We can help you prepare and administer surveys. Big data analysis, setting up control rooms, everything required to win these elections. We'll help you for free.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

A few months after this appearance, Bannon also met with then-minister of the interior Salvini, and escorting him to the Viminale was a Lega envoy named Federico Arata. He is the son of Paolo Arata, the silent partner of wind-power magnate Vito Nicastrì, who just a few days ago was convicted for bankrolling fugitive mafia boss Matteo Messina Denaro. Paolo Arata is accused of offering a 30 thousand Euro bribe to Lega undersecretary Armando Siri, in order to introduce an amendment favouring wind power. And Arata's son Federico was the one discussing electoral strategy with Bannon.

### **FROM THE BRINK – BY ALYSON KLAYMAN**

### **STEVE BANNON - FORMER WHITE HOUSE CHIEF STRATEGIST**

We're looking to provide polling, data analytics, board room messaging.

### **FEDERICO ARATA**

It's the idea that with this we can become the number one party in Italy. And then you have to tell them we have to plan. "Plan" is the key word... Victory at the European elections.

### **STEVE BANNON – FORMER WHITE HOUSE CHIEF STRATEGIST**

Steve Bannon had set up his headquarters in Collepardo, in the province of Frosinone, inside this magnificent 13th century Abbey, the Certosa di Trisulti. For eight centuries it housed Carthusian Friars. Bannon and Harnwell wanted to turn it into a school of populism. After our story ran last April, the irregularities we exposed prompted the Ministry of Culture to revoke its lease to Dignitatis Humanae. But a few weeks ago we returned to the Benedictine monastery and found a surprise.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What are you still doing here? Didn't they kick you out?

### **BENJAMIN HARNWELL – PRESIDENT OF DIGNITATIS HUMANAЕ INSTITUTE**

Soon.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Are you doing like the guys at the social centres? You're squatting at the Abbey!

### **BENJAMIN HARNWELL – PRESIDENT OF DIGNITATIS HUMANAЕ INSTITUTE**

Everyone thinks we already left.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Even though the ministry of culture had assured us they would be evicted by the end of July, Benjamin Harnwell and his organisation are still based here. Dignitatis Humanae is a link in the chain connecting the world of Malofeev with the American world close to Donald Trump. A piece of evidence is in these photos from 2012, showing the inauguration ceremony of Steve Bannon and Benjamin Harnwell's Dignitatis Humanae organisation. Doing the honours is once again him, the representative of God's oligarch, Alexey Komov.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

May I know why you asked Komov to give the presentation speech of Dignitatis Humanae?

**BENJAMIN HARNWELL – PRESIDENT OF DIGNITATIS HUMANAЕ INSTITUTE**

I can't remember who introduced us.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

No, why did you choose him?

**BENJAMIN HARNWELL – PRESIDENT OF DIGNITATIS HUMANAЕ INSTITUTE**

Well... He's a very smart guy.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Isn't it a bit odd, though, that Americans are working hand-in-hand with the Russians on these topics?

**BENJAMIN HARNWELL – PRESIDENT OF DIGNITATIS HUMANAЕ INSTITUTE**

No, because as Steve Bannon has said, there are things where we can collaborate. I see no issue in Christians wanting to collaborate in order to promote their interests.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

And Dignitatis Humanae seems to have played much more than a secondary part in building the holy alliance between Russians and Americans. In 2014, during its convention in Rome, Steve Bannon spoke via Skype and gave his blessing to the new collaboration with the Russians.

**STEVE BANNON – DONALD TRUMP STRATEGIST**

You know, Putin is a very, very, very intelligent man. We in the Judeo-Christian West must pay close attention to what he has to say about traditionalism and his support of nationalism. I believe that at this time in history, with the looming threat of a Caliphate, we can reach a deal with him on certain things.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

Right around this time, we see a rapid increase in the cash flow from ultra-religious American associations towards Europe. We spent months researching the financial operations of these American foundations and discovered that, in the past 10 years, they wired over one billion dollars to Europe. Almost 700 million came from associations funded by the National Christian Foundation, America's largest ultra-conservative foundation, which has a yearly budget of almost two billion dollars.

**PETER MONTGOMERY – SENIOR FELLOW RIGHT WING WATCH**



If I'm a businessman and I want to finance an anti-gay campaign but I don't want to attract criticism for my contribution, the easiest solution is to give the money to the National Christian Foundation. Then, they will channel the funds to others. This way, the money can't be traced to me.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA VOICEOVER**

We can see who's receiving the money but not who's sending it. And things get even murkier with financial flows towards Europe, as nor the recipients nor even the countries are specified. Among the ultra-conservative organisations that wired the most money to Europe are the American Bible Society with almost 50 million dollars, and the Discovery Institute, which promotes pseudo-scientific creationist theories. Then there are various foundations that are part of the World Congress of Families, like the Alliance Defending Freedom and the American Center for Law & Justice, which sponsor lobbying activities in Brussels for nearly one million dollars. The icing on the cake is the Acton Institute, one of the most powerful groups of America's religious right, which even has an office in Rome. Since 2013, Acton has sent nearly one million dollars to Europe and has worked closely with the Dignitatis Humanae Institute.

**BENJAMIN HARNWELL – PRESIDENT OF DIGNITATIS HUMANAЕ INSTITUTE**

We receive lots of support from Americans.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Has the Acton Institute ever funded you?

**BENJAMIN HARNWELL – PRESIDENT OF DIGNITATIS HUMANAЕ INSTITUTE**

I don't think so. I believe not. I don't think so.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

You're not sure?

**BENJAMIN HARNWELL – PRESIDENT OF DIGNITATIS HUMANAЕ INSTITUTE**

Like in all of our interviews, I'd like to say no, they never funded us, but then I'll see you pull out a paper and say "look..."

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

You're afraid I'm gonna show you the papers? That prove you wrong? ...

**BENJAMIN HARNWELL – PRESIDENT OF DIGNITATIS HUMANAЕ INSTITUTE**

I'm used to that by now...

**SIGFRIDO RANUCCI IN STUDIO**

Poor Benjamin, our Giorgio must have really traumatised him. And really, who can blame him? He pulled out so many papers that the government eventually revoked the abbey's lease to him, his organisation and Bannon, who planned on using the location to build an academy of populism, a school where they would train what they call "the angels of change", in order to mould Italy's new political class. Speaking of documents, Report has found a few unpublished ones that suggest the Lega was secretly at work in building a Russian-American axis. We found emails. And we learned about the role of Federico Arata, Paolo's son, whom we saw greeting Steve Bannon at the airport and escorting him to the Viminale Palace. In one email written by Federico Arata, the Palazzo Chigi consultant chosen by Giorgetti introduces himself as "the Lega's spin doctor", who's trying - he says - to help the party "elevate its standing from a social ans also international perspective". The young Arata writes an email to a man named Ted, CC'ing

Siri as well, where he basically claims to have been "the mastermind, together with Ted, of Salvini and Giorgetti's trip to the US", a trip which Salvini and Giorgetti were very pleased with, because it was a crucial step, and they were very happy with Ted's work. So, who's this Ted? Ted is Ted Malloch, the fixer who was involved in the Russiagate scandal, who had a role in recovering the compromising Hillary Clinton emails, the ones hacked by the Russians. Another one who had some kind of role was Armando Siri, the Lega's economic policy consultant. When he was presenting his plan for Italy's Flat Tax, he asked the Belarusian government for their blessing. There's an email that shows this, and also another email, where he asks Belarus for help in getting Putin to record a video message, which he was hoping to play at his own institute. He would have indoctrinated young politicians with Putin's message.

So perhaps, even more than the 65 million Euro in bribes that have so far not been found, Salvini should give an explanation for all these other things. To make sure that, when it's time to make a choice, Italians don't go vote for a man holding a rosary whose motto is "Italians First", only to eventually discover they've also elected a Russian oligarch, included in the package.