

## **"THE BLACK VIRUS"**

*By Giorgio Mottola*

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*With the contribution of Norma Ferrara – Simona Peluso*

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### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

How a video by the news show *TGR Leonardo* went viral is a rather unusual story. It was extremely difficult to find on search engines. So, for five years the story remained buried in the RAI website's archive – until last month, it had zero views.

### **SIGFRIDO RANUCCI IN THE STUDIO**

This video appeared on social media and on our mobile phones while we were at home in lockdown, somewhat nettled by the long, enforced quarantine. It was an old *TGR Leonardo* report, showing Chinese reporters in a lab, experimenting on a strain of coronavirus. And we all shared the same suspicion. The SARS-CoV-2 strain is manmade, the poisoned fruit of Chinese researchers. We all posted it on our profiles, including me, though I pointed out that scientists had excluded any human intervention and that the video was spreading quicker than coronavirus. Who pushed it so far? Who made it go viral? With what intent? And, above all, was it real or fake news? There's a fine line there.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

If you have a social network profile or just use WhatsApp, while locked away at home you will certainly have seen this video.

### **TGR LEONARDO – FROM 16/11/2015**

It's an experiment, sure, but it's worrying. It worries many scientists. A team of Chinese researchers inserts a protein taken from bats into a SARS virus strain, or acute pneumonia, obtained from mice. And the result is a supervirus that could infect people. Obviously, it's kept in labs. It's for research purposes only; but is it worth running such a risk, creating a threat so vast, just so we can study it?

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

The report comes from a real piece of news, based on a scientific article published in *Nature*. But the incident dates back to 2015 and in terms of coronavirus there is no link with SARS-CoV-2, the virus strain we all had been dealing with in the past few months.

### **ALEX ORLOWSKI – ONLINE PROPAGANDA EXPERT**

This isn't fake news, it's called false context. It means taking a piece of news, a well-researched piece of journalism, and placing it in a different context. RAI's dependability is known all over the world, so even non-Italian speakers watching a RAI video, despite it being from 2015, will place it in a false context. Its meaning is changed.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

On social media, the video is seen as proof that Covid-19 was engineered in a lab. And in just a few hours, it reaches million of views on social media and WhatsApp, even though, immediately after it's posted, there are many – starting with the Open website – proving that the video's meaning has been manipulated.

### **ALEX ORLOWSKI – ONLINE PROPAGANDA EXPERT**

Posters added a lot of, let us say, misleading labels. RAI uncovered this in 2015. Coronavirus was made in a lab by the Chinese. Moreover, non-Italian-speakers, or even Italian speakers, didn't actually watch the video, didn't attempt to understand it, and therefore failed to interpret it. They misinterpreted it.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

How a video by the news show *TGR Leonardo* went viral is a rather unusual story. It was extremely difficult to find on search engines. So, for five years the story remained buried in the RAI website's archive – until last month, it had zero views. Then, suddenly, on 25 March, someone viewed it, and between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. the number of views hit 474. It first appeared on WhatsApp. And *Report* managed to identify the first sharer – the viral video's patient zero.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So, in some ways, you are patient zero of this viral video about coronavirus?

### **CRISTINA ROMIERI**

Yes, it certainly seems so. Indeed, on 24 March I found a note I made, which I was about to throw away, and it read "Chinese scientists create supervirus". Then I remembered it was about a programme. In fact I'd noted that down, too, *TGR Leonardo* from 16 November 2015. And of course I looked for the video, to check I'd understood it properly, and I couldn't find it.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

As confirmed by the Facebook post, on 24 March Cristina found a note she'd made about *TGR Leonardo* and did an online search for the video. As she couldn't find it, she asked a friend for help.

### **CRISTINA ROMIERI**

A friend of mine found it the morning after, on 25 March, and at about 11.30 a.m. – I checked the messages – he said he found it and sent it to me. Then both he and I forwarded it on, but only to a few people.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

And here's the proof. At 11.38 a.m. on 25 March, Cristina's friend forwarded her the video on WhatsApp, downloaded and edited by him, in the same format it started spreading.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

When you forwarded that video, did you mean to make it go viral?

### **CRISTINA ROMIERI**

No. Absolutely not. No, no, we didn't think of it.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What did you think when you found out that this video was being used to spread disinformation?

### **CRISTINA ROMIERI**

I was sorry, of course. I didn't have any political motive, absolutely none.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Political disinformation began spreading when, from WhatsApp, the video started circulating on Facebook.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Where did people suddenly start viewing the video?

### **ALEX ORLOWSKI – ONLINE PROPAGANDA EXPERT**

On Facebook groups, which are great at making certain topics go viral, and also, at the same time, on Twitter, which is another channel. Simultaneously, and this is an indication of the kind of circles who wanted this video to go viral, it appeared on VKontakte, the Russian social network. Some videos made, for example, in the United States or South America or Asia, will never go viral on VKontakte. When, on the other hand, they're made by European far-right or nationalist groups, one of the distribution channels is VKontakte.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Yet it took some time to spread on VKontakte, the Russian social channel turned sanctuary for the far right in Europe. At 6.20 p.m. on 25 March, just one and a half hours after the first view, the *TGR Leonardo* video was posted on Matteo Salvini's profile, then Giorgia Meloni's, reaching more than 3 million views. A few minutes earlier, at 6.07 p.m., the video was also uploaded on YouTube by Stefano Monti, a Five Star activist who in 2014 ran as a candidate in the regional elections in Emilia.

### **STEFANO MONTI**

I'm Stefano Monti. I work in the programming, IT and technology sector.

### **ALEX ORLOWSKI – ONLINE PROPAGANDA EXPERT**

To start with, this video was certainly pushed by the nationalist right in Europe, in Italy in particular, but almost in tandem with some early Five Star Movement sympathisers. Those sympathisers who loved Beppe Grillo's conspiracy news, which is a form of clickbait, conspiracy theory, pseudoscience.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

From Italy, the video started travelling around the world. It was taken up by activists from the Orthodox Church in Romania and it hit 500,000 views. Websites belonging to the alt-right, the American radical right, such as Infowars, banned several times from social media for spreading fake news, and European neo-Nazi forums such as Stormfront and Zero Hedge, a Bulgarian far-right website.

### **ALEX ORLOWSKI – ONLINE PROPAGANDA EXPERT**

This graph shows which web pages the content linked to *TGR Leonardo* was most pushed from.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

And what do we learn?

### **ALEX ORLOWSKI – ONLINE PROPAGANDA EXPERT**

We learn that in most of the world these are pages mainly connected with the alt-right or the far-right. Then, we have a segment purely linked to pseudoscience, such as ufology sites – so many ufology sites, it's unbelievable. Nationalists, conspiracy theorists and so on.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

And anti-5G groups, too, I see.

**ALEX ORLOWSKI – ONLINE PROPAGANDA EXPERT**

Anti-5G groups are really going for it.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

On Facebook, 5G is seen as the cause of coronavirus, and videos showing fake attacks on mobile phone towers are widely shared.

**VOICE OFF CAMERA**

The tower is on fire. A mobile phone tower.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

I also see web pages against the Pope.

**ALEX ORLOWSKI – ONLINE PROPAGANDA EXPERT**

Many of these web pages aren't simply spreading alt-right ideas and fake news but are based on fake news, against the Pope or Islam, for instance.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Online, disinformation about coronavirus spreads much faster than the actual virus. This video, published on the video blog ByoBlu, serves as an example. The scientific community reported it as dangerous and unscientific. It shows a nanopathology expert asserting that the coronavirus emergency is just a hoax.

**FROM BYOBLU24**

**STEFANO MONTANARI - NANOPATHOLOGY EXPERT**

All these coffins are for the 650,000 deaths we have every year in Italy. The death rate has not increased. Here we are dealing with three dead people, if indeed there are any.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What was the main platform for spreading disinformation about coronavirus?

**LUCA NICOTRA – AVAAZ NGO**

Our investigation clearly shows that Facebook was the main platform for this online pandemic of disinformation. Immediately followed by WhatsApp, which belongs to Facebook, so we could say that most of the responsibility lies with Zuckerberg and his company.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

The research undertaken by Avaaz shows that Facebook was the main vehicle for online disinformation. False content or manipulated news about coronavirus has been shared over a million times and viewed about 117 million times in Europe. And in Italy, as in Spain, disinformation on social media has got most out of control. Indeed, unlike in the English-speaking world, Facebook rarely flags what news is fake for its Italian users.

**LUCA NICOTRA – AVAAZ NGO**

In our country, just like in Spain, 70% of news carries no warning even weeks after it's published, so it keeps on being shared – tens, hundreds, thousands of times every day – and seen by millions of people every week, even weeks after it's first posted. Moreover, if later on a journalist, an independent fact-checker, demonstrates that it's fake news, well, even in that case the millions of people who've seen the fake news will never know it was fake.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

And during a pandemic, this threatens to have devastating effects. Much disinformation, for example, concerned health and behaviours for the prevention of coronavirus. For instance, that same ByoBlu video warned against wearing gloves.

### **FROM BYOBLU24**

#### **STEFANO MONTANARI - NANOPATHOLOGY EXPERT**

Gloves prevent our immune system, the defences we have on our skin, from reacting. Therefore, wearing gloves is very much worse than not wearing gloves.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Other posts suggested drinking water every 15 minutes so the virus would shift to the intestine and be flushed away. These posts have been published in dozens of languages, and adapted for different countries, showing a different scientific source or institution every time.

### **LUCA NICOTRA – AVAAZ NGO**

Disinformation basically behaves just like a virus; in other words, it mutates according to context, adopting each time the most effective form in order to, in this case, infect our minds and what we believe is the truth.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Another spearhead of disinformation concerned the role of Bill Gates in the emergence of coronavirus. For years, his foundation has sponsored studies to find a flu vaccine and all along it's been sounding a warning about the rise of a new pandemic. Just as thousands of scientists and heads of state have. But the mere fact that Bill Gates previously mentioned this was enough to turn him into a likely plague spreader.

### ***IL VASO DI PANDORA***

Three weeks before the first outbreak, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation ran a simulation of a global coronavirus pandemic. American soldiers went to China for a military celebration and two weeks later, just about the incubation time, the first case of coronavirus appears, and clearly the cause is a fish market.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Without a doubt, the Forza Nuova neo-fascist movement is one of the Italian parties most active in spreading online disinformation. According to them, many of the death certificates stating coronavirus as the cause of death have been forged, so that funeral homes can make a profit.

### **GIULIANO CASTELLINO – FORZA NUOVA LEADER**

I'll tell you, dozens and dozens of gravediggers, as we call them in Rome, are still working, they visit the morgues and doctors and nurses ask them about the cause of death, and they tell them to write coronavirus, so they can get more money from the European Union.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

At the start of the epidemic, the Forza Nuova president, Roberto Fiore, made this appeal on Twitter. "Stop the quarantine and take some tocilizumab". That's the drug that helped many of those in respiratory distress, but not recognised by any scientific study as a definitive cure for the damages caused by Covid.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

When did you study medicine and virology?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

When I mentioned the drug I was confident, reasonably so, that it worked. I'd seen how it had worked in some cases.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So you are basically going against Burioni?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

I don't want to get into an argument.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

There's no argument. After all he is a virologist.

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

No, absolutely not.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

You say we should stop the quarantine. You say, "Take this drug. Let's stop the quarantine."

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

It was a point when the number of deaths was still low.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Forza Nuova launched a violent campaign on social media to boycott the quarantine and made an appeal to reopen the churches for Easter. The appeal by Forza Nuova was repeated on television by the Lega party leader Matteo Salvini.

**FROM SKYTG24**

**MATTEO SALVINI**

I support the requests of those who ask to attend church for Easter, in an orderly, peaceful and safe fashion. Give us permission to attend Easter mass in groups of three, four or five people. They're telling me, you can go and buy cigarettes because you can't do without them, but to many caring for their soul is as essential as providing for their body.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Perhaps you should sue Salvini for plagiarism. In the past few years he's appropriated all your buzzwords.

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

That's no bad thing. It's a good thing. As Almirante used to say, "When you hear your enemies repeating what you've always said, it means you're winning."

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Information has been a central theme to the Italian far right for a long time now. At a meeting, in the presence of former minister and mayor of Rome Gianni Alemanno, the spokesperson of the fascist movement Casapound, Simone Di Stefano, clearly stated the movement's plan, which also centres on RAI.

### **SIMONE DI STEFANO – CASAPOUND VICE PRESIDENT**

Social media isn't enough. It's not enough having a Facebook page with 4 million likes. It's not enough. We need to take RAI. How many journalists can the nationalists deploy? I'll tell you. Five leading ones and about 30 scattered among the various editorial teams, so 30, 40 journalists. They're not enough. We need to do more. Nationalists need to unite, in order to build schools of journalism, publish more magazines, buy a radio station.

### **SIGFRIDO RANUCCI IN THE STUDIO**

I doubt you could find fifty journalists at RAI willing to air the views of Casapound's spokesman. Obviously, the 4 million likes he boasts about are no longer enough for him. He sees RAI as territory to be conquered. In a recent episode, *Report* exposed how much fake news the profiles of his militant followers were spreading. Casapound and Forza Nuova derive from Terza Posizione, a movement founded in the '70s by Roberto Fiore. In October 1980 a warrant for his arrest was issued, on suspicion of his involvement in the Bologna massacre. Let it be clearly stated that he was released due to lack of evidence, indeed, later on, slander charges were brought against those who believed he was involved. Nonetheless, he was accused of being affiliated to the subversive organisation, for which he received a sentence of five years and six months. But he didn't spend a single day inside an Italian prison. He absconded for a long time, living mainly in London where, despite being a fugitive, he built a successful business and supported other neo-fascists. He was repatriated in 2008 by Berlusconi, and today Fiore is closely entwined with the founders of a movement established by the French-Belgian extremist Escada, the Coalition for Life and Family, a movement battling against Pope Francis. But today, Fiore and Forza Nuova can boast that they've inspired nationalists within the institutions. He came up with the slogan "Prima gli italiani" ("Italians first"), later appropriated by Salvini and the right honourable Meloni, or the phrase "ethnic replacement", which has been used against migrants. Then, when the argument about reopening the churches broke out, he launched into it and others followed him. And all this leads Fiore to assert "I'm winning," as we heard him say during the interview with Giorgio Mottola. But this is not an isolated example. There is, also, the link with Russian ultra-nationalism. In 2012, Roberto Fiore founded Alexandrite, a company, or association, which acted as a link between Italian and Russian businesses. And, in 2013, Savoini, Salvini's spokesperson, who was involved in the alleged oil trade negotiations held at the Metropol Hotel in Moscow, did the same. He founded the Lombardia Russia association, with the same purpose. Basically, after 30 years, Fiore is still a leader. He's president of the Alliance for Peace and Freedom, a network that engages and connects all major European far-right parties. Founding an international fascist party is, however, an old dream of his. Indeed, in the name of a saint, Michael the Archangel, the saint brandishing a sword, he attempted to establish a commune, to build an international black shirt commune in the Spanish countryside. Although the soil there is actually a bit red, a bit like on Mars. Back to our Giorgio Mottola.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

In the mid-1990s, Roberto Fiore tried to build a neo-fascist village in this remote corner of rural Spain, on the edge of La Mancha, where the soil is red and clayey. It's a rural hamlet, abandoned almost 30 years ago now, called Los Pedriches. Roberto Fiore sent a bunch of neo-fascists here to build what, according to the project, should have become a European far-right commune.

### **MIGUEL HABA PEREZ - LOS PEDRICHES RESIDENT**

This is one of the houses they bought and lived in. I used to see them, hello and goodbye, that's it. And here's where they built the church.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

This is the church they built?

**MIGUEL HABA PEREZ - LOS PEDRICHES RESIDENT**

Yes, they told me I had to attend it. I replied that I choose which church I attend.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

When they arrived they didn't explain what their project was?

**FINA RODRIGUEZ IBAÑEZ – LOS PEDRICHES RESIDENT**

No, they didn't explain anything. They came in six or seven cars. Yes, all dressed in black, like priests.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

About 50 neo-fascists have lived in Los Pedriches at different times. They bought land and houses, and occupied what they couldn't buy.

**MIGUEL HABA PEREZ - LOS PEDRICHES RESIDENT**

This is the house of an army colonel. They lived there and said they'd bought it. But I told them, "It's not true! It's not yours!"

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Made suspicious by their unusual arrival at the village and by their purchases, local councillors started an investigation.

**JOAN CANARERO - RED PRIVATE INVESTIGATION AGENCY DIRECTOR**

They appeared all of a sudden. People who couldn't speak Spanish. They came from Poland, from Romania. Nobody knew why.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Did they have a lot of money?

**JOAN CANARERO - DIRECTOR OF PRIVATE INVESTIGATION AGENCY RED**

They bought houses, they spent a lot of money. This is why the council started investigating. And it turned out that one of these houses had been bought by Roberto Fiore's wife. A bona fide property transaction, handled by a solicitor from Valencia.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Here is the solicitor concerned, Fernando Pazos. Renowned in Spanish far-right circles, he hit the headlines some time ago for stealing an employee's credit card and using it in a night club.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

It was a political project, several neo-fascists planned to occupy the area, right?

**FERNANDO PAZOS - SOLICITOR**

I can't remember. What I do remember is that an organisation called The Trust of Saint Michael the Archangel instructed me to buy some land.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**



Did you know that Roberto Fiore was behind Saint Michael the Archangel?

**FERNANDO PAZOS - SOLICITOR**

Yes, yes, of course.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

At Los Pedriches everyone says that in actual fact it was a neo-Nazi village.

**FERNANDO PAZOS - SOLICITOR**

Of course not. It was for Catholic charitable purposes.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

The Trust of Saint Michael the Archangel is one of the three Catholic foundations belonging to Roberto Fiore's ultra-traditionalist domain. Based in Britain, they were placed under investigation a few years ago due to financial irregularities, then they were forgotten.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Saint Michael the Archangel financed the commune you were creating at Los Pedriches, in Spain?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

No, not by itself. There were several sponsors.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Was it a neo-fascist commune? An international neo-fascist commune?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

No. But even if it had been, what does it matter if this was over 20 years ago?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Well, you attempted to build one in France, too, and elsewhere.

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

Is that a crime? Why would it be a bad thing?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Where did the money come from?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

Where did the money come from? We made it through our hard work.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

The trust's name, Saint Michael the Archangel, holds mystical significance for Forza Nuova. In 1997, neo-fascist militants swore their loyalty to the saint with the sword in front of a burning Celtic cross, as part of the founding rites of Forza Nuova.

**AGOSTINO SANFRATELLO - FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER – 29/09/1997**

We promise, we declare, never to taint ourselves with deceit and deception or compromise in reaching our goals. We will always tread the paths of honour and truth.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

This previously unreleased video showing the birth of Forza Nuova was filmed by one of the founders of the neo-fascist party, Massimo Perrone, a close associate of Roberto Fiore since the days of Los Pedriches.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What was the idea behind it?

**MASSIMO PERRONE - FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

To create a sort of political movement recalling somewhat Francisco Franco, Mussolini, so as to gain a foothold there.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

And it was financed by The Trust of Saint Michael the Archangel.

**MASSIMO PERRONE - FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

It was financed by Meeting Point, perhaps through Saint Michael the Archangel. Although someone must have given Saint Michael the Archangel money. I never saw Saint Michael come down and give us money.

**SIGFRIDO RANUCCI IN THE STUDIO**

By all means. We'll explain later what Meeting Point was. What were Fiore and his associate Morsello planning? To establish an international neo-fascist commune in a village in the Valencian countryside. And they started buying houses and land. Then, at some point, comrades from Romania and Poland also arrived. They walked around dressed in black and spent a lot of money, making the village's inhabitants suspicious, as well as the local councillors, who unleashed some private detectives after them. What did they find out? One of the property investments had been made by Roberto Fiore's wife, through a transaction drafted by a notary, a solicitor from Valencia, connected to the Spanish far-right circles. The notary told Giorgio "it was a charitable operation." Maybe he really believed that because the money came from a trust named after a saint, Michael the Archangel. When Fiore and Morsello founded Forza Nuova, they swore on that saint to always tell the truth, nothing but the truth. Who gave the money to The Trust of Saint Michael the Archangel? How did they fill the coffers of their company, Meeting Point, while they were on the run?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Meeting Point was at the heart of Roberto Fiore's entire economic and financial empire. The company was based in London and offered language courses and accommodation to foreign visitors. It was founded at the end of 1980 by the leader of Forza Nuova and his second-in-command, Massimo Morsello, while in London as fugitives. Here, in 1980, Fiore and some other Italian neo-fascists found shelter, escaping arrest and the conviction for subversive affiliation issued in Italy.

**MASSIMO PERRONE - FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

When Fiore was still a political exile in London, I...

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

A fugitive, rather.

**MASSIMO PERRONE - FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

A fugitive. I was preaching all over Italy.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

And how did you support yourself?

**MASSIMO PERRONE - FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

Meeting Point supported the whole entourage so that its political activities could go on.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Meeting Point sponsored the organisation.

**MASSIMO PERRONE - FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

Yes, it could afford to do so back then.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

In the mid-'90s Meeting Point was a giant in its sector. It managed over 2,000 lodgings all over London and had a turnover of 15 million euros. For the 1996 European Football Championship, FIFA contracted Fiore's company for the management of fan hospitality.

**MASSIMO PERRONE - FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

We were living the high life. Everything was paid for, rented cars, plane tickets, hotels, taxis.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

How much money per month did Fiore give you?

**MASSIMO PERRONE - FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

I don't know, about 4 to 5 million per month, maybe.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

You didn't actually do anything for Meeting Point?

**MASSIMO PERRONE - FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

No, as a matter of fact I didn't work for Meeting Point at all. Let's say I worked for Fiore.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Did Meeting Point sponsor your political activities?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

Undeniably and I feel honoured by it.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

How did you justify the expenses? You took money from Meeting Point's coffers to pay for political activities?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

Ask the tax office, find the right papers, because we're talking about 20 years ago.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

I wish it was that easy in Britain! It's practically impossible.

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

What are you saying?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

We spent months looking for Meeting Point's files at British Revenue and Customs, with no success. What we found out, instead, was that while Fiore was on the run, he led a rather luxurious life. He had various other businesses, registered under different names, and lived in the heart of the City of London, in a house worth 1,700,000 pounds. Yet, when he arrived in 1980, Roberto Fiore didn't have a pound to his name, he was wanted for subversive affiliation and charged, though it was later proved unfounded, for his involvement in the Bologna massacre. How did you manage to found a company and make so much money while you were in hiding?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

In Britain, and particularly owing to the unique British administrative system, we managed to build an empire from nothing.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

How many fugitives in foreign countries manage to make money, to build businesses? It's a mystery to me.

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

It isn't a mystery. You should appreciate ingenuity.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Happy to do so, but I still have a lot of doubts, as your personal history is riddled with many troubling gaps. Surely you agree that there are huge gaps.

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

No, there are no gaps.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

How did you make money while on the run, with international arrest warrants on your head?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

There can only be one explanation – with God's help.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

But according to evidence disclosed for the first time on Italian television, it looks as if help came in a rather more earthly form.

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

He didn't even have a place to sleep. When he came to Britain, Fiore had nothing. He's very rich now, I think, but when he first arrived he really was in a bad way.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Raymond Hill knows Fiore's story very well, as well as the stories of other neo-fascist fugitives. Between the 1970s and 1980s, he was one of the most prominent representatives of the British neo-Nazi movement. He forged relationships with the leaders of far-right parties all over Europe. But at some point he became an undercover agent for the British police.

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

At the time, I was close to the League of Saint George. I acted as intermediary for neo-fascists on the run from the law. The League of Saint George found them a place to stay and took care of them until they were back on their feet.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What is the League of Saint George?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

True Nazis, pure-bred Nazis. There aren't many of them, to be honest, but they're very powerful.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

These previously unreleased images show Ray Hill as he parades with the League of Saint George's flag during a neo-Nazi gathering in Belgium, in 1980. At the time, the League was one of the most baffling British far-right organisations. Openly racist and ultra-Christian, its goal was the creation of a European neo-Nazi network.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Do you know what the League of Saint George is?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

Yes.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Have you ever had any dealings with the League of Saint George?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

I've met them. They're totally irrelevant.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Perhaps it really was nothing important, as Fiore says. Yet, according to the evidence given by Ray Hill, leader of the League of Saint George for years, the organisation had enormous financial resources at its disposal, as well as political roots going back to the Third Reich, no less.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Who subsidised it?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

There were very wealthy people, like Doyle from Brighton, who was a multimillionaire, and others, also very rich. Such as two former SS officers.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Really? They actually were from the Third Reich?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

Yes, I met two of them.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

In those days, the British neo-Nazi group also included a woman, Rosine de Bouneville, a wealthy aristocrat who made her enormous villa in the countryside, Forest House, available for political gatherings. When she died, she bequeathed her house – worth 700,000 pounds today – and the surrounding acres of woods to the Saint George Educational Trust, of which Roberto Fiore was member and manager.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What do you know about Forest House?

### **RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

What everyone knew – it was a neo-Nazi military training camp.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

The history of the League of Saint George also ends up overlapping with a fragment of an Italian mystery. When the body of Roberto Calvi was found underneath Blackfriars Bridge, in London, his family entrusted the investigation to Kroll, one of the leading detective agencies in the world. Kroll discovered some links between the League of Saint George and Sofint, a company which the P2 used for various financial operations.

### **CARLO CALVI - ROBERTO CALVI'S SON**

Sofint issued several payments, lots to Lausanne and also to the League of Saint George.

### **SIGFRIDO RANUCCI IN THE STUDIO**

The League of Saint George, which also comprised Italian neo-fascists. According to Calvi, who hired Kroll – one of the most powerful private detective agencies in the world – to investigate the death of his father, the League also received funds from a society that belonged to, or was connected to, P2. Roberto Fiore told us in writing “I had humble beginnings, I started out washing dishes. Then I asked my associate Morsello to lend me 500 pounds.” Hill, the mole, holds a different opinion, although Fiore considers him unreliable. According to the mole who infiltrated the neo-Nazi movements, it was the League of Saint George that, at the very beginning, had strengthened the financial foundations of Fiore's empire. And the League comprised old Nazi SS officers and neo-Nazi millionaires. In other words, that's where the money from the Third Reich ended up. Then there was the neo-Nazi aristocrat who turned her estate, Forest House in the South of England, into a neo-Nazi logistical headquarters. Strategies were hatched there and, according to Hill, it was even used as a military training camp. When the aristocrat died, the estate, estimated at about 700,000 pounds, was bequeathed to a trust of which Roberto Fiore was member and manager. Next, again according to Calvi, 9 million dollars – over 9 million dollars, actually – was personally transferred by Licio Gelli to various neo-fascist circles in London, with the aid of some London-based antique dealers who had close ties with representatives of the Italian criminal organisation Banda della Magliana. Documents seized from the former leader of P2 also include mention of these funds, and are currently the focus of the Italian authorities, who are just now investigating the Bologna massacre. The sensational evidence that Hill gave to our own Giorgio Mottola might indeed shed some new light on the history of the Bologna station massacre. And it concerns a certain man called Enrico Maselli – not to be confused with Enrico Tomaselli.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

The exclusive evidence given to us by Ray Hill included some previously unreleased details concerning the origin of the massacre and the role neo-fascists played in it. Hill's story begins a few years before the Bologna bombing, in South Africa, where he'd moved in order to take the lead of the apartheid-supporting local neo-Nazi movement.

### **RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

There was a large Italian community, and it's sad to say but many were fascist militants, and they were very violent, I can assure you. I suppose they moved there because they were attracted by South Africa's racial policies.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Who did you meet there?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

Max Bollo was the leading man. He planned to create a unity or a kind of alliance between the British and Italian fascists who'd moved to South Africa.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Max Bollo was one of the leaders of Wit Kommando, the neo-Nazi terrorist organisation formed by several Italians that carried out various attacks in defence of apartheid in South Africa.

**MAX BOLLO – FORMER MEMBER OF WIT KOMMANDO**

Who were the people who continued to fight for Berlin in 1945? These people were not fighting for a bit of land. They were fighting for a world view, for an idea.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

And it was Max Bollo who introduced the Italian Enrico Maselli to Ray Hill. He's the protagonist of this previously unreleased behind-the-scenes information, which could shed new light on the connection between the Bologna massacre and other neo-fascist extremists who fled to London.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Who was Enrico Maselli?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

He was a violent man, but very clever.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

In 1980, Ray Hill left South Africa and settled back in the UK. And while he was in Leicester, a few months before the Bologna massacre, he was contacted by Enrico Maselli.

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

Maselli told me, "We've planned a series of actions that will cause us a lot of trouble. Could you find shelter for some of the comrades who'll have to flee Italy?"

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

When did he tell you this?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

In 1980.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

How many months before the Bologna massacre?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

Six months before.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What did he tell you exactly?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

He didn't explicitly mention bombing the Bologna station. But when it happened, I immediately knew he was involved, in some way or other. I knew it because he told me, "Violence is the only solution and the Italian state is corrupt and has to be destroyed."

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So, Enrico Maselli asked you for shelter?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

Yes.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

For the Italian fugitives?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

Exactly.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

And what did you do?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

I got them in touch with the League of Saint George.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Ray Hill's disclosure is sensational. According to his evidence, yet to be fully verified, Maselli arranged an escape plan for the Italian neo-fascists. In the light of this revelation, we immediately attempted to trace Maselli down.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Hello, we're looking for Enrico Maselli.

**MAN**

Yes, please.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Thank you.

**MAN 2**

Hello, hello. Here's Enrico!

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

First investigated and then acquitted in 1974 for affiliation with an armed group, he was soon after convicted for unlawful possession of weapons. That's why he fled Italy for South Africa and the United States, where he started working for a company operating in the defence sector.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Do you know Raymond Hill?

**ENRICO MASELLI**

What a weird question.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**



Why weird?

**ENRICO MASELLI**

Can you tell me why you'd like to know?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

He told us some things about when you met up with him.

**ENRICO MASELLI**

Are you talking about a British man?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Exactly, he's British.

**ENRICO MASELLI**

And his name is Ray Hill.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Ray Hill, exactly.

**ENRICO MASELLI**

We're talking about a meeting that took place in 1980. He was in South Africa. He talked a lot of bullshit about me.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

So, Maselli confirmed he did indeed meet up with Ray Hill, and also when they met up, additionally revealing that it happened about four months before the Bologna massacre. From here onwards, however, their accounts differ completely.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

It seems that you were looking for a place, looking for shelter, in Leicester, for some neo-fascists who were about to flee.

**ENRICO MASELLI**

No, absolutely not.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

And you never alluded to something big that was about to happen?

**ENRICO MASELLI**

Absolutely not.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

But were you in possession of some information about the massacre, before it occurred?

**ENRICO MASELLI**

How could I have been?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So, you were not involved in the Bologna massacre at all.

**ENRICO MASELLI**

How could I have been? Absolutely not.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Maselli denied possessing advance knowledge about the Bologna massacre and having asked the League of Saint George for assistance for the Italian neo-fascists on the run. At the beginning of our conversation, Maselli even denied knowing of them, but after several probing questions he conceded that at least one meeting had taken place.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

So, you met Fiore and the others in London?

**ENRICO MASELLI**

Once, in London, in a pub. I read something in the papers. And I met them once, in London, out of curiosity. Don't make a big deal out of this.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Do you know who Enrico Maselli is?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

Enrico?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Maselli.

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

No. Those Saint George people never gave me a penny or a bed to sleep in. Nothing. These are mostly lies.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Lies they may be, but we found a previously unreleased document by the British Special Branch police that reads, "There is little doubt that the Italian settlement in this country was assisted by members of the League of Saint George". One of the sources of information is Raymond Hill, who, had started collaborating with the police back then.

**ENRICO MASELLI**

To me, a rat will always be a rat. That's how it works.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Ray Hill is a rat.

**ENRICO MASELLI**

Ray Hill is undoubtedly a rat. He basically stole some information and decided to interpret it as he fu-... as he well pleased.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Did you ever mention Maselli to the British police?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

Yes, of course.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

You told them about Enrico Maselli?

**RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

Yes, absolutely.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

And the Italian police never asked you what Enrico Maselli may have told you?

### **RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

No, never. No, I'm sure of it.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

How come that the Italian investigators never listened to Ray Hill? The reason is found in the documentation relating to the Bologna massacre, and it's rather grotesque. When Hill's tip-offs reached the Italian police, they asked the British Special Branch for further information. But the Italian authorities made a crucial error in their request. They asked for clarifications on the relationship between Ray Hill and Enrico Tomaselli, rather than Enrico Maselli. In those days, Tomaselli was also a neo-fascist and former member of the Italian neo-fascist group Terza Posizione.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Are you aware that the Italian police investigated your relation with Enrico Tomaselli, rather than with Enrico Maselli?

### **RAYMOND HILL – FORMER LEADER OF THE BRITISH NEO-NAZI MOVEMENT**

Yes, they made a mistake.

### **SIGFRIDO RANUCCI IN THE STUDIO**

If true, this is no laughing matter. This incredible, previously unreleased detail might shed new light on the Bologna massacre. What did Hill say? Hill said, "I met Enrico Maselli, I was introduced to him by an Italian who moved to South Africa, Max Bollo, leader of a neo-Nazi organisation, an organisation responsible for attacks in defence of apartheid." He said, "A few months before the Bologna massacre, Maselli called me and asked for help, he told me, 'We've planned a series of actions that will cause us a lot of trouble. Could you find shelter for some of the comrades who'll have to flee Italy?'" Hill said he had reported all this to the British police, but when the information reached the Italian police, the name included in the report was not that of Enrico Maselli's, but of another neo-fascist – Enrico Tomaselli. When the Italian prosecutor's office started investigating, no evidence was found, the case was closed, and Hill was labelled an unreliable source. No wonder. Whereas Giorgio tracked Maselli down, who confirmed he knew Hill and had met him in 1980, but also denied what Hill said they'd discussed and called him a rat. Who's telling the truth? The verdict must be suspended as, due to that incredible clerical error, an investigation was never opened. We'll see what happens. Anyhow, all this aside, the British documentation also revealed that the League of Saint George, this peculiar organisation, assisted the neo-fascists who were fleeing Italy. The documentation doesn't mention Fiore, let that be clearly stated. However, his name appears in another, previously unreleased document. A report by DIGOS, the Italian law enforcement agency, identified Fiore and Morsello as the links in a network that provided cover for the fascist fugitives who'd fled Italy. How could two men on the run continue to operate in London for years while remaining undetected? Then, one day, a one-eyed man knocked at Meeting Point's doors. He swore he could see perfectly well.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Roberto Fiore's mystery kept Jeff Katz, one of the most prominent British private detectives, up at night. Katz is the man who, in 1980, employed by the Kroll agency, had the case of Calvi's death reopened by proving that it had not been a suicide.

**JEFF KATZ - DIRECTOR OF PRIVATE DETECTIVE AGENCY THE BISHOP GROUP**

The British authorities stated that there was no cause for arrest, which I thought was weird, as he was under suspicion for his possible involvement in the Bologna massacre. Eighty-five people had died, among them two British citizens. I always thought it peculiar that they didn't seem bothered.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Was Fiore involved with the British secret services?

**JEFF KATZ - BISHOP GROUP PRIVATE INVESTIGATION AGENCY DIRECTOR**

He could have been an informer.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

No court ever confirmed a possible connection between Fiore and the British secret services. However, Fiore is actually identified as a Secret Intelligence Service agent in a 1991 investigation committee report by the European Parliament.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What's this about a relationship with the secret services?

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

Absolutely not! The reason is clear and simple. I am a revolutionary. And I wouldn't compromise with the secret services, Italian or British. Well, I might be tempted by the Russian ones. They have some good roles going. But no, not even the Russians.

**MASSIMO PERRONE - FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

Look, I remember this one time. It was a funny thing. Our headquarters, Meeting Point's, were in Kensington, and there was a floor upstairs used by Special Branch. And everyone said it was MI6. So much so, that once I ended up on the wrong floor and I went into the police station. All polite, they told me, "Wrong floor. Meeting Point is downstairs."

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

There was still the feeling that Fiore, in any case, enjoyed special protection in London.

**MASSIMO PERRONE - FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

I believe that some saint is looking after Fiore. Because it makes no sense. He's involved in all these court cases and they're either cancelled, or he's acquitted, or deemed non-prosecutable. Fiore never spent a day in an Italian prison.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

While absconding, Roberto Fiore and his associate Massimo Morsello not only became rich, but, through Meeting Point, financed the European neo-fascist network. In this previously unreleased tapped conversation by the Milan public prosecutor's office, Massimo Morselli is heard talking with a representative of Franco Freda, the Italian neo-Nazi ideologue involved in the Piazza Fontana massacre, later released due to insufficient evidence.

**MAN**

Unfortunately we have the appeal.

**MASSIMO MORSELLO**

So we need it.

**MAN**

Exactly.

**MASSIMO MORSELLO**

So, how do I give it to you? First of all, we have to know where.

**MAN**

In Milan.

**MASSIMO MORSELLO**

Who do I make it out to?

**MAN**

Well... I need to see because... It'd be better... In Italy there's a law stating that cheques above a certain amount must be registered and all that...

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

In those days, they were holding the appeal for a trial concerning Freda's political organisation, and that's why he needed money. But Morsello also took care of others belonging to the neo-Nazi network. For instance, he was also identified when, for unknown reasons, he sorted out the payment to Paolo Giachini, the Roman lawyer who historically defended former SS officer Eric Priebke.

**PAOLO GIACHINI**

Can't you leave my name out of it? You know, these people, they're trying to make connections, so... To avoid publicity it'd be best...

**MASSIMO MORSELLO**

Sure, sure.

**PAOLO GIACHINI**

Especially in money matters.

**MASSIMO MORSELLO**

How much was it, do you remember? How much do you want? In any case, we'll leave it open.

**PAOLO GIACHINI**

Look, it was four something.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

According to these phone conversations, it's not clear where the money's coming from.

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

And where would the money have come from?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

They mention straw-man transactions, cheques that shouldn't be over a certain amount to avoid audits.

**ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

The least suspicion or trouble and the police would have been all over us, you must realise that.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

This 1997 DIGOS report, which remained buried in the judicial archives and was never used to bring a trial, identifies Fiore and Morsello as leaders of an international fascist organisation whose role was to financially and logistically support far-right fugitives. A kind of new ODESSA, the organisation that after World War Two planned the escape of Nazi leaders. Indeed, according to DIGOS, Fiore and Morsello's London network provided assistance to several neo-fascist fugitives, including Angelo Angeli, the neo-fascist who raped Franca Rame, Elio di Scala, known as "Kapplerino", and Pasquale Belsito, former member of Terza Posizione. It seems that at the end of the 1990s, even the neo-fascist Massimo Carminati, known as "Er Cecato" [the blind man], approached Meeting Point. The former leader of the Italian organised crime association Mafia Capitale was spotted at the offices of Fiore and Morsello's London company by one of the founders of Forza Nuova, Pietro Minervini.

**PIETRO MINERVINI – FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

Carminati? I only saw him once, by chance. He came to ask about expanding his riding stable.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Did you meet Carminati in London?

**PIETRO MINERVINI – FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

Only in passing.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

At Meeting Point. And he came to ask for money?

**PIETRO MINERVINI – FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

He had a project.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

What project?

**PIETRO MINERVINI – FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

Expanding his riding stable.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

And why tell Morsello?

**PIETRO MINERVINI – FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

They must have known each other, right?

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Was it to involve Meeting Point in the project?

**PIETRO MINERVINI – FORZA NUOVA CO-FOUNDER**

Maybe.

**GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Before joining the Banda della Magliana, Massimo Carminati was an active member of NAR, the Italian far-right terrorist group, with whom he committed various crimes.

#### **FROM RADIO RADICALE**

##### **MASSIMO CARMINATI - MAFIA CAPITALE TRIAL FROM 29/3/2017**

I'm an old fascist from the 1970s. I'm happy with who I am. It was my life. Many of my friends died and I'm very happy with who I am.

#### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Another founder of Forza Nuova, Minervini, told us he'd also seen Carminati at Meeting Point, in the mid-1990s.

#### **ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

I'm glad to hear it.

#### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Did you ever meet Carminati in London?

#### **ROBERTO FIORE – PRESIDENT, FORZA NUOVA**

Absolutely not. A few times in Vigna Clara, we went to the same bar. I never spoke with Carminati. You should read your papers more carefully, you'd understand things better. Do your job, do your research.

#### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

It's through research that we establish that Fiore and Carminati had some people in common. Such as Stefano Tiraboschi and Vittorio Spadavecchia, neo-fascist members of NAR who, like Fiore, fled to London in the 1980s.

#### **TAPPED CONVERSATION FROM 6 JUNE 2013**

##### **MASSIMO CARMINATI**

Do you know my friends Spadavecchia and Tiraboschi? In the '90s they were wanted by the police. They were wanted, then...

#### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Stefano Tiraboschi had been Roberto Fiore's cellmate and, for a brief period, business associate. At least, according to the reports provided by the private detectives Padfield. Tiraboschi and Vittorio Spadavecchia founded a company based in an office in the heart of London, and, just like Meeting Point, their company provided accommodation to foreign visitors. They were neo-fascists on the run, having been sentenced in Italy for subversive affiliation. But despite being wanted by the police they, too, soon became very wealthy entrepreneurs at the wheel of a real estate empire based in the City, whose estimated value amounted to millions of pounds. During several tapped conversations, Massimo Carminati boasted of their success and in 2012 flew to London in order to meet them.

#### **FROM RADIO RADICALE**

##### **MASSIMO CARMINATI - MAFIA CAPITALE TRIAL FROM 29/3/2017**

We went because we had to visit our friends who lived there, and I, among other things, had to find a flat for my son. Also, I was glad to see my two friends who live there. I hadn't seen them in years, they're part of my life. I was happy to see them. I was glad.

#### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

These are previously unreleased photos, unearthed by *Report*, of the meeting that took place in London, in 2012, between Massimo Carminati, Stefano Tiraboschi and Vittorio Spadavecchia. The British police trailed the former NAR members the whole time Er Cecato was in London.

### **FROM RADIO RADICALE**

#### **MASSIMO CARMINATI - MAFIA CAPITALE TRIAL FROM 29/3/2017**

They trailed me, even in London, but they're less professional abroad and I saw them following me on their scooters. They hadn't considered that I'd been leading this life for many years. I only have one eye but it sees very well. Believe me.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

The photos were taken in front of Stefano Tiraboschi's restaurant, Mediterraneo, frequented by Madonna, no less, as Carminati mentioned in one of the tapped conversations. Tiraboschi owns two other restaurants on this street, Kensington Road, one of the most exclusive in London. This neighbourhood is now home to former NAR members. Indeed, here's where Vittorio Spadavecchia's estate agent's was based. To date, he's still on the list of 30 former terrorists wanted by the Italian authorities.

### **ALFONSO BONAFEDE – ITALIAN MINISTER OF JUSTICE**

Today we want to tell the world that no one escapes Italian justice.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Plenty of police resources were mobilised to find the former left-wing terrorist Cesare Battisti, but the Italian judicial system still can't find Vittorio Spadavecchia, who still has 12 years to serve in prison. Yet, for a small admin fee, we were given easy access to a title deed and discovered that Spadavecchia owns a flat in one of the poshest, wealthiest London neighbourhoods.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

Hello, I'm Giorgio. I'm looking for Vittorio.

### **VOICE ON THE INTERCOM**

Vittorio is not in. He's at the office.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA OFF CAMERA**

But when we went to the office address they'd given us, we only found some Chinese people wearing protective masks, who asked us to leave. We were about to give up when, a few hours later, we saw him walking along the street, near his house.

### **GIORGIO MOTTOLA**

Vittorio Spadavecchia? I'm Giorgio Mottola, a RaiTre journalist. I'm sorry, I don't want to bother you if... Sorry, I don't want to chase you, if you could just give me a moment. Sorry... Vittorio, I don't want to chase you.

### **VITTORIO SPADAVECCHIA**

Leave me alone!

### **SIGFRIDO RANUCCI IN THE STUDIO**

He's right, no one's bothered him for 30 years, so why should we? Here we are, Spadavecchia has been on the run for 30 years, but Giorgio, by simply accessing a title deed, found his home address, a posh flat in a posh neighbourhood. Over the years, he'd also met up with Carminati, Er Cecato, who also went knocking at Meeting Point's



door, the company owned by Fiore and Morsello, asking for money to expand his riding stable. As we mentioned before, memory is a bit like the tide. Suddenly, when you least expect it, it washes back the remains of a shipwreck. This time, it washed back a 1997 DIGOS report, which had remained buried in the archives for a long time. This report says that Fiore and Morsello were the owners of an international fascist company, a network that, over the years, provided logistical and financial assistance to Italian neo-fascists on the run from the law. The year was 1997 and the Piazza Fontana massacre was under investigation. The Milan public prosecutor's office identified several far-right representatives, including Morsello, whose involvement was however proved unfounded. The neo-Nazi Maurizio Murelli was also identified, and heavily sentenced for taking part in the killing of a police officer. Later, he founded the cultural association Orion, inspired by neo-Nazi ideology and aspiring towards a Eurasian continent ruled by Russia. Disclosing previously unknown information, he named Gianluca Savoini as his reference point, as the Trojan horse who got him into Lega. Savoini, at the time, worked as a journalist at *La Padania*. He used to click his heels and give the fascist salute when he entered the newsroom, and Hitler's face and photograph, and Nazi symbols reinterpreted for the Padania region, were found on his PC. He was later involved in the Metropol scandal, became the spokesperson for Matteo Salvini's new Lega party, and, as previously mentioned, took part in the supposed Russian oil trade negotiations aimed at, according to the prosecutors, financing the campaign of Matteo Salvini's Lega in the European elections. The tapped conversations from 1997 also revealed that Meeting Point, Fiore and Morsello's company, also had various journalists on its payroll, who would write supportive articles and spread their ideas. They were paid, according to Morsello, up to 10,000 pounds under the table. Money as black as the shirts worn by the Nazis and fascists.