

# The plans of the Mafia to undermine Italian democracy and destabilize State institutions

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“My brother’s death was a State murder.” There’s no room for misunderstanding in Salvatore Borsellino’s words: seventeen years ago, on July 19th 1992, anti-Mafia Judge Paolo Borsellino was killed in a car-bomb attack in Via D’Amelio, in Palermo, Sicily, outside his mother’s house.

With him, five of his six bodyguards lost their lives, Emanuela Loi, Agostino Catalano, Walter Cusina, Claudio Traina e Vincenzo Limuli. Antonino Vullo is the only police officer that survived. Since then, Salvatore Borsellino has tirelessly denounced the negotiations between the Italian State and the Mafia and the fact that his brother was killed because he had found strong evidence of the collusion between the Mafia and the national political class.

Two months before Paolo Borsellino’s death, his friend and colleague in the struggle against organized crime, Judge Giovanni Falcone was murdered in a bomb explosion in Capaci, the highway to Palermo. In the attack died also Falcone’s wife, Francesca Morvillo, and their bodyguards, Antonio Montinaro, Rocco Di Cillo and Vito Schifani.

Seventeen years later, those massacres are still shrouded in mystery and Salvatore Borsellino points the finger to the Parliament for not wanting to shed light on his brother’s death. Giovanni Falcone died on May 23rd 1992 and Paolo Borsellino, seemingly very close in finding the mastermind, knew he was next: “The load of TNT for me has already arrived in Palermo,” he started to say a week before his own death.

During the demonstration organized this year for the commemoration of Borsellino’s death, Italian MP Franco Barbato was very outspoken over the role of some political leaders and their collusion with the organized crime, accusing the vice-president of the CSM (*Consiglio Superiore della Magistratura*, the independent executive body of the judiciary system), Nicola Mancino of protecting the interests of the Mafia by blocking the course of justice.

Tellingly, a few days prior the commemoration in Palermo, Salvatore Riina, former boss of the Sicilian clan of Cosa Nostra, jailed since 1993 also for the murder of Giovanni Falcone, after sixteen years broke his long silence and accused the institutions of Borsellino’s killing. At this regard, Gioacchino Genchi, police superintendent at the time of the attacks and afterwards appointed technical consultant in Caltanissetta in the trial for Borsellino’s murder, has commented that Riina’s words only confirm what investigations were already proving, namely “the role of the institutions in the 1992 slaughters aimed at changing Italy’s destiny.”

With the end of the Cold War the Mafia, having built its illegal business taking advantage of

the instability of the bipolar system, started to fall apart over three fronts: the end of its monopoly in the drug trafficking, the end of the international unconcern over its illegal activities and the beginning of the end of the Corleonesi, the bloodiest and most violent clan of the Sicilian mob. [1]

Between 1989 and 1992 were issued determining measures in the anti-Mafia struggle, and Cosa Nostra, headed by Salvatore Riina, tried to impose its conditions to the institutions using the connections they had inside the Parliament. As the political leaders tried to play for time, letting the Mafia know it was impossible to keep stopping the course of justice like before, the strategy of terror became more violent. When the maxi-trial ended with some “excellent” convictions, it suddenly became clear that the State was not “cooperating” anymore, and the Mafia set up its vengeance: on March 12th 1992 Salvo Lima, member of the European Parliament, belonging to the Christian Democrats, one of the closest allies the Mafia could count on within the Italian Parliament, was shot dead in the streets of Palermo. Salvo Lima’s murder can be seen as the symbolic killing of Christian Democrats’ historical leader Giulio Andreotti, maybe because considered a traitor by the Mafia after the final verdict of the anti-Mafia maxi-trial. [2]

Judge Borsellino was investigating the relations between the State and the Mafia, and after Falcone’s death he tried to shed light on the massacre, to prevent the danger of the destabilization of the national institutions and of the whole country. While the Italian public mind was focused on another maxi-trial, Milano-based Clean Hands (known also as Tangentopoli) that involved a huge part of the political class accused of long-term and widespread corruption, the Mafia plan was, in fact, to accelerate the political destabilization of the country with an increasing number of bloodsheds throughout all 1993, in order to cause panic and speed up the collapse of the already tottering First Republic. After having undermined the institutional resistance by killing the most reluctant representatives of the State, the organized crime would have then created a new political entity able to finalize a federal reform and originate a new sort of “Southern League.” As a result, the rich Northern Italy would have followed the rest of Europe and abandoned the poorer Southern regions in the hands of the Mafia that would then transform it in a tax haven and hold total political and economic control. [3]

This plan was known only by a small group, and even some who were involved in the organization cooperated to its accomplishment unaware of the bigger picture. In June 1992, less than a month after Falcone’s murder and a month before Borsellino’s death, supergrass Leonardo Messina decided to reveal the subversive plan: according to him, it was organized by the collaboration between the Cupola of Corleone and criminal fringes of the Masonry and of the secret services. [4] Also according to anti-Mafia Judge Roberto Scarpinato, by gathering the information brought to light in the trials, it can be said that between 1992 and 1993 in Italy was taking place a plan of destabilization, in which the organized crime colluded with corrupt arms of the Masonic Lodges and the secret services.

This is in line with Salvatore Riina’s recent declarations that point to the Utveglio Castle, head office of the *Cerisdi*, local agency temporarily used as a cover for a body of the *Sisde*, the Italian secret services. The castle was very likely also the organizing location of the commando, from where the order of the remote-controlled explosion was made. From the same place, it seems the secret services had made unauthorized tapping on the phone of Borsellino’s mother, to control the magistrate’s movements in Via D’Amelio. One more point considered during the trial has been the unreasonable lack of protection in the small street

where Borsellino's mother lived and where the attack actually took place. Months before, in fact, police officers and security experts had complained and pointed out that Via D'Amelio was an easy target and establishing a restricted area only for authorized cars had become necessary after Falcone's murder.

Another mystery around Borsellino's death involves his red agenda, where he used to take all his notes, and that right after the attack disappeared from the crime scene and was never found. What did Paolo Borsellino write in his red diary? Who took it and why did they take the high risk of being seen in the crime scene? Had the judge found out who Falcone's killers were? Borsellino had said several times, in both official and unofficial occasions, that he knew about important details that could help solve the case of Falcone's death, but that he would have told them only to the judge in charge of the trial, which was the public prosecutor Salvatore Celesti of the Court of Caltanissetta. However, amazingly Borsellino was never summoned before the court to formalize what he had to say.

There are still too many unsolved questions regarding Borsellino's death, and it seems like after every seemingly revealing step, more mysteries come along. As Judge Antonio Ingroia pointed out, it is mandatory to find the truth because, if the First Republic was created over the blood of the slaughter of Portella della Ginestra on May 1st, 1947, when twelve peasants were killed by the clan of Salvatore Giuliano commissioned by political instigators to shave off the "Communist danger" right after the Second World War, the Second Republic was born over the blood of magistrates and police officers killed because committed to fight organized crime. [5]

[1] Roberto Scarpinato & Saverio Lodato, *Il Ritorno del Principe*, Chiarelettere, 2008

[2] Roberto Scarpinato & Saverio Lodato, op. cit., p. 285

[3] Roberto Scarpinato & Saverio Lodato, op. cit., pp. 292-93

[4] Giuseppe Lo Bianco & Sandra Rizza, *L'Agenda Rossa di Paolo Borsellino*, Chiarelettere, 2007

[5] Giuseppe Lo Bianco & Sandra Rizza, op. cit., p. 235

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