

# Statements of Alfredo Cospito & Anna Beniamino at the hearing on June 19, 2023 at the Turin Court of Appeals

Alfredo Cospito, Anna Beniamino

June 25th, 2023

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## **Alfredo Cospito: Statement at the June 19, 2023 hearing at the Turin Court of Appeal**

This statement of mine is closely related to the trial because it goes into the merits of the sanctioning treatment you imposed on me. Sanctioning treatment that is unconstitutional and contradicts your own laws. Sanctioning treatment, 41 bis, that distorts the very meaning of my imprisonment, imposing on me a senseless censure that limits my right to defense.

It is obvious to all how my trial affair has been used as a sort of cudgel by one political party, "the government," against another political party, the so-called "opposition." My last-minute transfer from one section to another in anticipation of the arrival of PD parliamentarians is a striking example. Which shows how the DAP and 41 bis have been exploited for political purposes.

These facts are closely related to this trial because they are the product of past political dynamics that led to our disproportionate prosecution and conviction for political slaughter. To shut my mouth now, at the only time I can defend myself would mean endorsing this dangerous and totalitarian drift. Before talking about Fossano and the so-called "massacre" (although there is little to say, it would be enough to look at the images of the damage of the tremendous explosion) for just two minutes I will have to mention three deaths, two of which I am somehow responsible for, the third death that of Cosimo occurred at the clinical center of Opera, ward 41 bis.

They are all deaths linked to my case because they are linked to the impunity of the regime in which I have had to struggle and survive for a year now in order not to succumb. I cannot remain silent, I owe it to those sentenced to death locked up in that clinical center, I owe it to

those who have been left to die and to those who at this moment in the Sassari prison are letting themselves die to make their voices heard. I owe it to Domenico Porcelli who has been on hunger strike for four months. At his side are his children and Maria Pintus, his lawyer. Supporting him are those few anarchist, communist and Sardinian independence revolutionaries who at the cost of jail and repression are fighting against 41 bis. Domenico for the state is a mafioso, therefore indefensible cannon fodder, for him the constitution does not apply. For him no cloying catwalk of politicians, no media attention. I am sure, Domenico will not make headlines even when he is dead. As, moreover, has already happened to two poor souls who died one after the other on hunger strike in the Augusta prison. And for which I feel responsible, because influenced by the media hound that followed my strike they gambled by quickly slipping to their deaths. Their deaths caused no stir, a complicit and obscene silence enveloped them. One of them was a Russian citizen and was simply asking to be repatriated. Imagine what would have happened if it had been an Italian who had starved to death in a Russian prison—humanitarian associations and the media would have raised a fuss. Instead, his death went unnoticed, indifference was total, revealing the hypocritical, racist, imperialist face of the West. The hypocritical face of the same ethical state that in order to keep its old complicities hidden keeps up the 41 bis horror slum. An open secret that has been resisting for 30 years, that no one has the courage to confront, whoever touches dies ... and that will end, in the will of those who conceived it, only when the last witness of that agreement between the State and the Mafia is dead and buried within these walls.

Sometimes I have the doubt that it is the system itself that wants to be told, why else move to Opera to what Nordio had the courage to describe as a medical facility of excellence. A chaotic and deadly slum where the old and dying are parked in solitude waiting for death. In this subspecies of asylum in the hallways it rains, summer you die of heat, air conditioning does not work, winter you die of cold. At the windows wolf mouths, cockroaches, ants, mosquitoes go crazy tormenting people who are bedridden, paralyzed, elderly, dying, blind.

Between June and October 2022, in a clinical center that can “house” 12 people, six did not make it, did not survive. If you are lucky a few days or hours before death you are transferred to the hospital where treatment is more humane, but where you always die among strangers without the affection of loved ones. Everything is on the shoulders of the boys and girls who clean and scramble between diapers and medicines, and the nurses—and who try to do their best but are few in number. The doctor in charge shifts the responsibility to the nurses, often calling herself sick, which is quite embarrassing. Of course, speaking of inmates in precarious health situations where just being neglected a tad more is enough to see you slip to your death, objections from the sick are scarce. But a few fearless inmates have protested and the courts have agreed with them, but speaking of 41 bis, a world apart and children of a lesser god, everything has remained the same.

No one should die isolated in a cell, under the cold eye of a camera filming him in the room 24 hours a day. As happened in June 2022 to Cosimo Di Lauro. This inmate died of starvation, he was not on hunger strike, he had simply stopped drinking and eating, according to the testimonies I have heard, and not only from inmates, “his head was not in it.” One morning the guard found him dead, monitored in his cell by a camera, his agony filmed, without anyone lifting a finger. Di Lauro never made it to the hospital, unlike yours truly, transported to the hospital at the slightest hint of illness even though his life was not in immediate danger. Cosimo a simple “mafioso” and in addition unable to reason and assert his rights was left to die. An investigation was opened,

testimonies were taken, including those of a courageous prisoner, but everything was covered up, until today at least....

So many things I have seen in my year of 41 bis. It is not only deaths that are covered up but it can happen that 41 bis is misused for other purposes. And this "misuse" covered up. To be covered up is the all too clear use of DAP by the government to go after the so-called "opposition." I'm talking about the parade of PD deputies in Sassari and the government's instrumental use of the DAP briefings that concerned me to go after the PD. To make a point, the stupid placing of Fratelli d'Italia in parliament. Indicative is my transfer just a few days before the arrival of the parliamentarians (of which I am sure, the government was aware) from a "quiet" section where I was spending my days in solitude to a section where in the distorted view of the DAP there were the "big" pieces of Sassari, the so-called bosses. Who said by the way did everything they could to convince me to stop the strike, and who were then pilloried in the media because of me. No one will get it out of my head that the DAP was "inspired" by the government. Just after the visit of the parliamentarians the section was dismembered and I transferred to Opera.

How many naive traps were set for me that then regularly backfired on the system itself. Seizure of court notes turned into pizzini, the ludicrous accusation of an alliance between the Mafia and anarchists, the surreal accusation of pretending to go on strike.

The conviction I've formed over the past year is that 41 bis has no real goal of breaking the phenomenon of criminal organizations. But to gag a generation of mobsters, whom the state 30 years ago used and then betrayed. Locking them in here until they die shutting their mouths forever, and that is because of the fear that once they are out the dark secrets of the republic can be revealed. This is as I said the open secret behind the untouchability of this regime.

41 bis will be lifted when the last inconvenient witness of that era is dead. This of course if it is not extended to the rest of the so-called "justice system," barbarism tends to run rampant, and it can get out of hand. Between the Mafia and the State many similarities, hegemonic will, monopoly of violence, hierarchy, authoritarianism. But then once in here I realized that in addition to these undoubted common features there is a kind of "original sin" that needs a liberticidal system like 41 bis to hold the pieces together, without which the system as a whole would fall apart. This is precisely what the untouchability of 41 bis consists of, its having become the nerve center of the whole totalitarian democratic system, the true face of the Italian republic.

For the rest what can I say... nothing has changed, photos of my parents seized a year ago here in Sassari, and returned with a censorship stamp upon my arrival in Opera, again withheld upon my arrival in Sassari. No music, my request to buy a CD player rejected by prison management. Apparently books and music continue to be seen by the DAP as something subversive, and they have a point after all.

Since I have been in 41 bis I have not touched a blade of grass, a tree, a flower, only concrete, bars and TV. In the last few months with great difficulty I managed to buy only one book, and only because the media was talking about me. Interviews only once a month with the glass and the metallic voice of the intercoms. My sisters and brother, who are the only ones who can visit me, come upon their arrival waxed on about tattoos and earrings because they might communicate cryptic messages through the tattooed designs.

However, these grievances of mine become ridiculous after what I saw at the clinical center in Opera. I have seen with my own eyes the state purporting to ethically enforce the law of retaliation on the old and sick, helpless and half-demented.

My naive request for books, music, anarchist, scientific, historical periodicals and a lawn to run in and a few trees becomes laughable, almost sickening. I realize this.

Abolish 41 bis.

Thank you comrades.

Always for anarchy.

**Alfredo Cospito**

[In videoconference from Bancali prison, Sassari, June 19, 2023]

*We are circulating Anna Beniamino's statement at the June 19 hearing in the court of appeals in Turin on the calculation of sentences against Anna herself and Alfredo Cospito as part of the Scripta Manent trial. The comrade was connected via video-conference from Rebibbia prison in Rome (regulations do not require in-person presence). Replications and sentencing against the comrades are postponed to a later hearing scheduled for Monday, June 26, at 12 noon, also at the Turin court.*

**Anna Beniamino: Statement at the June 19, 2023 hearing at the Turin Court of Appeal**

After years of trial, dozens of hearings, I am not tired of continuing to reiterate what I have stated so far, to affirm some simple and tautological truths, against the exercise of falsehood perpetrated with scientific method in courtrooms.

Anarchists are anti-authoritarians. Anarchists are not mass-murderers, much less defend mass-murderous actions.

The massacres that have been perpetrated in this country have been the poisoned fruit of the intertwining of political and economic power, as far removed from antiauthoritarian thought and practices as possible.

We are in a political process for which not the reality of the facts but the power of suggestions is valid, the more abnormal and axiomatic the accusation, the more vain the defense.

You keep jabbering on about massacres but the real one is the one carried out on the reality of the facts. You have invented anarchist "bosses," "associations" functioning hiccup or structured like Chinese boxes in which it is no longer even clear which are the containers and which are the contents, "probabilistic" graphical expertise to attribute the facts, the latest treat in order of time was the collusion between anarchists and Mafiosi.

The argumentative mechanisms in attributing crimes and creating ad hoc biographical profiles make Orwellian scenarios something exquisitely retro.

The inquisitors lie knowing that they are lying and shield themselves from the refractoriness of anarchists to the marketplace of justice. They play on the fact that anarchist ethics are not for sale to the highest bidder.

The infernal machine of the DNA (Direzione Nazionale Antimafia) turned DNAA (Direzione Nazionale Antimafia e Antiterrorismo) needs scalps to grind consensus and to fortify the scaffolding of preventive repression: internal enemies are needed, no matter if artfully constructed with historical, political, factual and procedural falsehoods, if not the machine runs out of gas and the special regimes devoid of flesh and souls.

Today there is only our head left on the plate, but it should not be forgotten that for years dozens of comrades and comrades have been indicted and jailed in this and in parallel self-feeding proceedings. Just as happened with the proceedings that led to 41 bis for Alfredo Cospito: the scaffolding of the Bialystok and Sibilla operations collapses, there are no leaders and instigators ... however, the 41 bis remains.

I catch a tragic irony in all of this: the various inquisitors muddle through not knowing well even the substance of the accusation, they stuff their papers with blatant falsehoods and con-

traditions, just get to the bottom line. Nothing strange: it is the sick ethics of this age where murderous profit is sanctified and poverty is criminalized.

Rome, June 19, 2023

**Anna Beniamino**

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