

# Mémoire justificatif

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July 1874

Supporting documents that I write principally for my poor Antonia. I beg Emilio to read it first, then to give it to Cafiero to read, who could give it to his wife to read, if he thinks it is a good idea, and only after he has read it and added his observations it he finds it necessary, to give it to Antonia, but to destroy it by common agreement, since it contains political facts that should never leave the circle of our most intimate friends.

Emilio knows the beginning of the Baronata. It was long ago, in the autumn of 1872, or the winter of 1873, that Cafiero spontaneously conceived the idea of buying a house at Locarno with some land, of which I would be the nominal, proprietor where I would reside with my whole family endlessly and that would serve at the same time as a way station, refuge or temporary habitation for all our close friends. During the whole winter of 1873 it was only that, as much in our private conversations as in our correspondence with Cafiero.

In the summer of 1873 the Spanish revolution seemed to have taken a completely victorious development. We first thought to send a friend there, then at the entreaties of our Spanish friends, I decided to go myself. But to make that journey, we would need money and our only source of finances was Cafiero, and Cafiero was prevented from giving anything to us because he had still not finished his business with his brothers. We decided on a young friend and myself to press him and as it was useless and nearly impossible to do it by letter, the young friend went to his how. He was arrested there. So I was forced to communicate with Cafiero by correspondence, using a symbolic language that had been established between us. In one of my letters, responding to one of his, in which he energetically protested against my departure, I showed him the urgency of it and at the same time announced my resolution to leave as soon as he had sent me the necessary sum. I added an entreaty, that of becoming the protector of my wife and children in the case that I died in Spain. I had the friendship of Cafiero, whom I loved myself from the bottom of my heart. I had in him then an unlimited faith. Since our first encounter in the spring of 1872 he had shown towards me a boundless, almost filial tenderness. I thought therefore speak to him safely in this supreme circumstance. So my expectation was not mistaken, for he replied to me with a letter all full of fraternal affection, in which he promised me to become the vigilant providence of my family. But at the same time, he still protested against my departure, and he did not send me the money necessary to it, whether from real lack of money or a resolution on his part not to give it to me for this trip. He saw me as an invaluable being, absolutely necessary to our circle of friends, who should consequently be preserved at all costs, even against his will. Today, he has

come, it seems, to think of me like an old rag, absolutely useless and good to throw to the four winds.—I think he was mistaken then as he is mistaken today.—I have never been as valuable as he liked to think a year ago, nor as useless as he thinks today. But let us move on.

In the month of August 1873, Cafiero finally came to Locarno, freed from his brothers and he brought with him the first of the money. I do not recall the amount, but he will find it recorded in the great ledger that I gave him on the eve of my departure. What I know, and what he will doubtless not be deny, is that the use of this sum was settled between us, down to the smallest details. Among other things, there were a few thousand francs (see again the ledger) assigned to the first payment on the Baronata, which had bought, not only with his consent, but as a result of its most urgent solicitations. At first that appeared only an expense of 14,000 francs., which then increased 4000 francs due to the blunder committed by Chiesa, who had left out the two fields that were part of the property, without which, according to Gavirati, in agreement with everyone, that property had no value.

It is at that moment that the story of our fantastic imaginations and enterprises begins. The Baronata, now our property, consisted then of the old house that you know, a fairly large, but quite dilapidated vinyard, a very small garden, and the stables, minus the new addition of the shed and the room above.—It was obvious that the old house had too few rooms to house my whole family and also all the friends who would temporarily live with us. To compensate, there were only two means: either by enlarging the old house, by adding two very big rooms behind the gallery and above Papa's bedroom and the dining room, or building a new house.—I nodded resolutely to the first plea. I had something like a presentiment about the construction of a new home, and it seemed to me that the addition of two bedrooms was absolutely sufficient for our needs. But someone objected to me first that the house was damp, and humidity, said Dr. Jacoby, who had accompanied us on this investigative visit with his wife and the Zayzews, becomes deadly for a precious health and that dear health was then, as I have said, the principal presumption of Cafiero, at least judging by what he said. I no longer know if he said what he thought, as I had been convinced then, for it is only in very recently that I began to perceive that with regard to me, as with everyone, there is often a great difference between his word and his intimate thoughts.—Besides one added, and this observation came precisely from Cafiero, the addition of two rooms would not be sufficient for the object proposed, and finally that the two new rooms, completely deprived of sun, would just be unhealthy.

It was decided against my recommendation to build a new house. They went on an expedition on the mountain, by a path so hard to climb that I did not accompany them, and two months later I still did not know the location chosen for the new house. Ostroga was in the party and he was invited by Cafiero to draw up the plan for the new building. Ostroga made two. One was larger, in conformity with Cafiero's instructions, the other smaller, that of the present home, with some modifications and embellishments proposed by the engineer Galli. Cafiero long recommended, with the obstinacy that he is his sometimes, for big the house. It was always a question for him above all of the conservation of my dear health, and he had asked Dr. Jacoby to indicate the main hygienic conditions. It was a consequence this then dominant tendency that assigned to me not one, but two large and beautiful rooms on the ground floor between the corridor and living room, when they finally resigned themselves to settling for a relatively small house. It was something quite different in the big house—Cafiero had recommended to Ostroga to establish, beside even the two most beautiful rooms that were assigned to me, on one side a large greenhouse where I

could come to breathe the scented atmosphere of the flowers, and on the other a bathroom etc. etc.

Cafiero recalls that Dr. Jacoby, always faithful to the fantastic sophisticated habits of his mind, had claimed then that medical science had some very certain means to prolong if not endlessly at least indefinitely the life of a man, even a sick old man like me. I can not say that the Cafiero had taken him completely seriously, but he listened to Jacoby with great attention, and he begged Jacoby to prescribe the desired regime and begged me to submit to it. If Cafiero does not remember, let him appeal to the excellent memory of Zaysev in front of whom this question was raised and discussed repeatedly, in the most serious manner in the world. Now that I have learned the profound cunning of his character, of which I could not then have had the slightest suspicion, I can accept that it/he was mocked inside by all of us. But there was, to my knowledge at least, no fact which gave him the right or could have suggested the desire to do so. Everything he said and did oozed the most absolute confidence and inspired in me an unlimited faith in his friendship.

It was then that he uttered for the first time with a great deal of heat a thought to which he remained stubbornly faithful until his return from Russia. He said that I should now refrain from any revolutionary expedition, that I should leave that to the young people, as the always active and always secret, well hidden center of a permanent international conspiracy. I constantly combated this idea, not in some of its details, in which I agreed with him, but in its very principle—this principle, if I were to accept it, would necessarily condemn me to the unenviable and mostly useless role of a Dalai Lama who would get fat at great expense for the salvation of everyone. I agreed with Cafiero that the state of my health, my weight, my heart disease and stiffness in my limbs and movements would necessarily now make me ill-suited to adventurous expeditions that required above all physical strength, elasticity and rapid movements at every trial. But I always maintained my duty and right to throw myself into any revolutionary movement that assumes a more or less general character. Consistent and serious, and I have always felt and thought that the most desirable end for me would be to fall in the middle of a great revolutionary upheaval.

Besides, it was then between us nothing but an academic discussion, the circumstances were such that he could not think of a revolutionary expedition. The Spanish revolution had just failed miserably due to lack of energy and revolutionary passion in the leaders as well as the masses, and all the rest of the world was plunged into the most dismal reaction. Only Italy presented some symptoms of a revolutionary awakening, but there was still much work to do to draw a popular power from it. I therefore agreed with Cafiero not only I, but all of us should [...] for the moment as much as possible, in order to be able to work even better in secret, and that therefore there was no better way than to assume across the board the mask of the peaceful and very material bourgeois.

Under this new system it was accepted that I, as the permanent center of the association, would take more than ever the role of a tired and disgusted revolutionary, because of that disgust, having lost all illusions, threw himself with passion into the material interests of property and family. This had become all the more necessary as our circle had become not only the object of persecution and espionage by all the governments, but also that of furious attacks from the more or less socialist revolutionaries of other parties. I had especially become the object of denunciations and infamous calumnies on the part of the Germans and Jews of the school of Marx and Co.

So I had to pose as a bourgeois very easily absorbed by the interests of my family. There was a pretty serious disadvantage to that, which had not escaped our attention. Everyone knew that until now I had been very poor, living in a state close to poverty. How were we to explain to

the world the sudden, wonderful transformation of my fortune. Cafiero and I discussed this issue often, and we decided that first we did not have an account to render to the bourgeois world for which we had only hatred and contempt; that I could have inherited or received from Russia a part of my property, by means that in order to escape persecution and the confiscations of the Russian government must necessarily remain secret; and that then the same poor pretext to slander us, far from concerning us, should delight us, since that would still serve us better hide our game.

As a result of this resolution, one fine day I became a bourgeois if not rich, at least at ease, without being accountable to anyone outside of our closest friends for the way I had become such. Three men were an exception to the rule here in Locarno: Emilio Bellerio, Zaycev and Remigio Chiesa, Zaycev as an individual friend very devoted and very discreet, and Chiesa because we needed him in many regards and because he had actually rendered great services to us, without us ever having to repent of our trust so far. Additionally, I also knew Dr. Jacoby and his wife as friends and the Ostrogas as old allies and friends. But even the venerable Paolo Gavirati, for whom I have such a deep respect and who has so many times proven to me his unalterable friendship, even he was not taken into our secret confidence, and this for the following reason: it been decided that I would make every possible effort to obtain the rights to a Swiss citizen in the canton of Ticino, and Gavirati should be precisely the one who more than others could and would help me to obtain it, which he certainly would not have done if he even suspected that I continued to concern myself with militant politics for fear of jeopardizing his beloved Switzerland in general and the canton Ticino in particular. I would add that Gavirati never asked me any discreet questions, and that despite the rumors of all sorts that continued to circulate on my account, he never showed me any mistrust, and in the end he helped me always and everywhere anyway.

It was a result of all these resolutions in common that I published a month later two letters by which I declared, due to illness and old age, my retirement from all political action into private life.

So then I established myself a bourgeois propertarian. To give me more of the appearance, Cafiero insisted that I have at least one horse and carriage and it is himself who made the purchase of old Pina and a very old and extremely dilapidated carriage, in the place of which he himself bought the new carriage. It was also he who absolutely decided that I should buy the second horse, a wagon and a boat. He even wanted to go himself either to Milan or Varese to buy the carriage and wagon until he found both in Bellinzona. Cafiero is asked to remember that I constantly protested against all these acquisitions, and that I always ended up giving in. Moreover, he and Emilio know that I personally had very little use for the carriage and even less for the boat in which I did not even go out once. As for the carriage, as necessary as it was given the remoteness of the Baronata from Locarno, I always felt a painful sense of shame in entering it. It always seemed to me that I resembled the raven walking around in peacock feathers, and for a long time I maintained the absolute ban on harnessing the carriage with two horses; but I was compelled to give myself the new horse not wanting to work Pina alone. I insist on all these little details first because they were quite expensive by themselves, and they indicate at the same time the tender concern of Cafiero for my physical well-being. Most often this solicitude was imposed on me with a gentle violence. It was something else when he tried to impose the Banting System on me. He not only wanted me to dine apart, but there was a separate table service, cooking and provisions for me. Jacoby having said that Bordeaux wine was excellent for me, he insisted

on putting in a stock and I had great difficulty in dissuading him. He also recalled how one day returning from Milan, with an old friend who was once *maître d'hôtel* in the big house of some Marquis, he brought exclusively for me a quantity of excellent things.—But I would never finish if I continued to talk about everything. To finish, I would add only this: I personally made very little use of the material well-being he insisted on surrounding me with. I neither ate nor drank more or better than with Giacomo, and those who know me know very well that I am not very demanding and refined in my food and that provided I have tobacco and tea, I am satisfied. That is my only luxury.

The only personal expense I made myself was made in Berne, in September 1873. I bought brand new clothes. Cafiero will find in the ledger our expenses from Berne, sizeable. I will add however that I did not dress myself alone, but with my three friends, that if I made myself a full provision of linen and clothes, it was again on the very pressing and indeed completely consistent recommendation of Cafiero, who told me that since we had decided that I appear as a bourgeois, it was absolutely necessary that I keep up all appearances. Finally he and all my friends know very well that I made very little use of all these new clothes, that I have worn them only on the very rare occasions when I went to Locarno, and at home I've always preferred my favorite old clothes, more or less torn, soiled and worn.

When, last October I returned from Berne to the Baronata, I found it in full debauch. I found the Holy Family Nabruzzi installed—him, his mother and a very difficult lady to classify, besides two Spaniards, one of my dearest Italian friends and Fanelli. The basic and directed expenses caused by the holy family were enormous. It was a cause for trembling.

The invitation of Nabruzzi with his mother as steward and housekeeper of the Baronata, motivated by many reasons unrelated to the latter and well known to Cafiero was decided between us two. It was a most unfortunate choice, not that Nabruzzi was a bad man. On the contrary, he is a great boy and a very loyal friend, but at the same time completely incapable of directing and administering the slightest thing. His government and that of his mother cost us much too much money. Cafiero knows all my efforts, all the storms I made to decrease the spending. Nothing made Nabruzzi merely balance the accounts in his best writing, but uncritically and without any control. Finally sent Madame Nabruzzi and Miss H. away. We replaced the service of the house. The old *maître d'hôtel* of the Marquis, our friend, took over the management. It was another system, but not a difference in the economy. Cafiero knows this, and he knows the despair that I felt as a result, and it was only after the departure of old Pezza that I managed to establish, with the help of a Madme Zaysev, a bit o economy. In the end, during that winter we spent just for the maintenance of the house more than Antonia would have required for a year or perhaps a year and a half. Was that my fault? Certainly not. I did not let one day pass without protest, often without shouting. Cafiero knows it well, but it was useless, because myself, I heard nothing of it. Besides, the house fed and lodged a mass of people, there was no order there, and a general waste of everything. The superior order that Antonia found was all that could be done.

Cafiero should ask Nabruzzi for all the old accounts that are at his home, but only in order not to seem unfair to Nabruzzi because it must be noted that among these accounts, [...] not those of the internal administration of the house, there many that concerned the exterior work. But these works were as disordered as the administration of the house.

For the outdoor work [...] the garden as well as the new drive, we unfortunately came across two scoundrels: the gardener Molinari and Nicora, the shirker, the one the only gardener of Locarno, recommended as such by Giacomo Fanciola, the other recommended by Chiesa. Cafiero

knows all the tribulations we experienced with them, so it is enough for me to say that all the work that they did until January, was not only immensely expensive, not only of no use, but was often even harmful and as such had to be completely redone. That was an education that cost me dearly. Cafiero knows what difficulties I had to conquer in order to rid myself of these two scamps. He knows that the true work only began on January 18. Everything that has been made and remade, undertaken and changed as much in the internal administration of the house as in that of the external labors has not only been carried out with the full knowledge of Cafiero but has been discussed in all the details and decided in common with him, for I have never ceased to consider and treat him as the true proprietor of the Baronata, and he has often reproached me for doing it too much and appearing as such, saying that he on the contrary believed he should step aside in order to better accomplish the aim that we had proposed.

He also took a very active part in the negotiations that we have in half of January with Paolo Gavirati, the engineer Galli, Ruggiero, Luigi Rusca and Giacomo Fanciola in relation to the radical changes that it was necessary to introduce in the labors of the Baronata, and he aided me very energetically in the affair of the expulsion of Moliari become absolutely necessary. It was thus that were concluded in his presence and with his full assent the contracts with Torri for the Ronco and the lake, with Rossi for the new house and finally with Cerutti for the arrangement and planting of the kitchen garden as well as the garden. All these labors and all these expenses encroached upon and necessarily led to one another. So having two cows and two horses we first had to seek a woman to milk and care for the cows and a coachman for the horses. It was Cafiero himself who went to seek and who brought us the coachman, the old Beppe, but coachmen are expensive, and the upkeep of the cows and horses, which we have never been able to organize economically, has cost us a lot of money. Then it was necessary to construct a large manure pit in order to supply the plantings on land that had remained without fertilizer for some year. We had to reconstruct the stable (la scuderia), which fell into ruin and threatened to crush the men and horses and necessarily to add there a shed for the carriage. In order to be able to plant, it was necessary to undertake a great movement of earth and the construction of may walls, in order to farm the Baronata we had to plant many fruit trees. I had decided with Cerrutti that the costs of the plantings should not exceed 3000 francs, but it surpassed that figure by more than 2000 francs, with all the expenses included. As the Baronata above all lacked water, it was absolutely necessary to construct the cistern that was proposed by Roggero and accepted by Cafiero as well as by me. Then once decided that the new great house on the mountain would be constructed, it was necessary to make the lake, for otherwise we could not have stone for the construction, it was equally necessary to construct the new carriage road, for without it the construction of the new house would cost double. All of that was discussed, proven, and adopted by common accord. And Carlo had taken an active part in all these discussions and resolutions.

I confess that from that moment and even before, I began to become very anxious at seeing us more and more dragged into expenses of which it was difficult to foresee the end. We talked about it then with Cafiero, and it was decided among us that I would ask the engineer Galli to give me the approximate count of the expenses that I would have to make for all the constructions that had begun. He gave me one, about a month later, in the month of February, if I am not mistaken, but very incomplete, an account in which he had forgotten to place many important expenses, such as his own, for example. However, we took this account for a basis and agreed with Carlo that to finish everything, we would need at least 50000 francs more, not Italian but Swiss. Cafiero enlisted me to slow down the labors for a month in order to give me the time to produce that

sum, after which, he both told me and wrote me, I could give a large development to the work. And in fact, that is what I did, as much as was possible. But the calculations of the engineer were far surpassed by reality, that is by the labors ordered by himself. We made the contract with Martinelli for the road for 3000 francs and thanks to the dishonesty of that gentleman the road cost us clear to 6000 francs.—I have already said how Cerutti had surpassed without my knowledge the sum assigned for the planting. For the house the engineer had calculated 500 cubic meters of stone to extract from the lake, each of these meters should cost 7 francs, which would amount to 3500 francs for the stone alone. Instead of that the house consumed more than a thousand meters of it, just double, 7000 francs for the stone by itself. Add the cost of transporting the sand, and even the water, and you will understand how the construction soon surpassed the calculations of the engineer. I saw all that and I could not prevent it and passed many nights without sleep. We spoke this spring with Charles and we admitted to each other, that ignorant of both those things, we had let ourselves be dragged into undertakings of which we had not been able to calculate the scope, and if we had it to do over again we would not have undertaken it and in its place we would have worked out something else, but now, he added, it is impossible to stop; we must finish things. When Cafiero brought me the 50000 francs he asked me if that would suffice until June, and I responded that it would be enough until after July.

Here I want to confess and clarify my fault. I only made one, which is to have accepted from the first the fraternal proposal of Cafiero. By rejecting it I would have maintained the integrity of my life until the end, and I would have now been free to dispose of it according to my own beliefs and inclinations. In the end I must admit that by accepting it, I committed treason against myself, against my past. To give it its true name, it was cowardice that I atone for today. Now I will tell the reasons why I accepted it, which can serve to some degree as my excuse.

First, I was really tired and disillusioned. The events of France and Spain had given all my hopes and expectations a terrible blow. We had calculated without the masses who did not want to become passionate about their own emancipation and without that popular passion, we had reasoned in vain and our theories were powerless.

The second reason was this: the only work that remained possible for us was concealed work, well masked. It was absolutely necessary for us to assume a peaceful, bourgeois appearance. Furthermore, the Swiss federal government, pressed by the Italian government, and consequently the cantonal government of Ticino absolutely wanted to confine me to the interior of Switzerland. I had all the trouble in the work remaining in Locarno. Cafiero's proposition gave me the means.

Finally, the third and most powerful reason was my concern for the future of my family, and my very great desire to give them a refuge and to insure, at least up to a certain point, their future.

I will say what, in relation to my family, passed between Cafiero and me, in order never to return to it.—He urged me to bring them back as soon as possible, by providing me all the money needed for their trip. He invited me at the same time to write to Antonia that she should from now on have no concern for the future of her children, that future being completely assured. It was in October that I sent to Antonia first 2000 francs, promising her 2000 francs more two or three months later. But these 2,000 francs, sent via Ostroga, seemed lost; several months passed without her having received them. Antonia, and especially her father, wrote me desperate letters. I broke the news to Cafiero, who told me to immediately send her another 4000 francs, which I also did at the end of March, in the meantime she had received the first 2000 francs. Then Carlo having asked me several times if I had written to Antonia that the children's future was assured,

I responded to him that I had not done it yet, and that I waited to write to her again because I did not want to entertain her with illusory hopes. Carlo reproached me for not having done so far and asked me to do so without further delay. So I wrote in this sense to Antonia.

I need to say that in all these affairs, enterprises and promises Carlo was inspired by the purest brotherly devotion and that it was precisely that grandeur of fraternal soul that made me blindly accept everything he proposed to me. There was also another reason for this acceptance. Cafiero thought himself much richer than he in fact was. He estimated his entire fortune to 400 or even 450,000 francs. Perhaps he might have realized that sum if he had not believed he should hurry the liquidation of his assets.

The second fault committed by me, and in part by Cafiero as well, was that I was put in charge of the direction of all these enterprises. All my friends know that I am a very bad saver and that especially in the beginning I didn't understand the business one bit. It is certain that if an experienced and practical man had been in my place, he might have done all that we did with half the amount that we have spent. But where to find that man? We sought him with Cafiero but we did not find him.

That is, in its general feature and in its most scrupulous truth, the history of my relations and transactions avec Cafiero until his return to Russia.

During his stay in his country, I made a purchase, the only one I would have done without having first assured myself of Cafiero's consent: It was the purchase of the Romerio property. It was highly recommended to me by Gavirati and engineer Galli. I heard since that Mr. Romerio charged me far too much. This was not the opinion of the Engineer Galli and our friend Gavirati. What tempted me most was the unquestionable value that this new acquisition, especially that of the woods, added to the house and therefore the Baronata. In deciding myself I was sure of the consent of Cafiero. If I was mistaken, too bad for me, I do not exonerate myself.

I have already said that I always considered Cafiero as the principal, if not the sole proprietor of the Baronata. According to justice it belonged entirely to him, according to fraternity it is at least, if he should possess it in halves or in common with me. On his return from Russia, in the presence of our friend Ross, I proposed to him to legalize that association or common property by a public deed. He responded that if I thought it was useful he would not oppose it, and invited me to consider for the few days that he spent at Barletta, the best means of accomplishing that project. I also informed him of the purchase that I had completed during his absence, he found, or at least he told me in front of Ross, that it seemed to him that I had made a good deal. I told him that in the end in order to finish all the work and to assure the internal administration of the Baronata and the existence of the family during the two years that it produced little or nothing, it would take at least 50000 francs more. He told me that he was just going to Barletta in order to finally settle his business. He returned the same night for the arrival of Antonia with the whole family. The next day Antonia informed me of the rumors that certain individuals, whom I believe it is useless to name, were spreading about Carlo Cafiero and especially about me. They said that I exploited the trust and inexperience of Cafiero, that I abused his generous friendship, that I would bankrupt him, etc. etc.—I told Cafiero about it right away, again in the presence of Ross; he appeared very moved and promised to talk with the slanderers about it. He returned the next day, but much changed. He told me that there had been no explanation to demand, because, at bottom, it was all true.—So it was true that I had maliciously exploited Cafiero's friendship.—That was not very flattering for me, but I confess that I did not at first that conclusion, so impossible did it appear to me that Cafiero could have settled on that idea for a single moment.—He said



to me with a warmth full of bitterness that we had committed a great, unpardonable folly, of which he recognized himself incidentally as guilty as me. That he demanded nothing of what he had spent on the Baronata, but that he was firmly resolved from now on not to spend a cent, a thought, or an ounce of energy, all that having to belong to the revolution.

I admit that this speech distressed me and struck me in the face like a hammer blow. First the bitter, wounding, suspicious tone, with which all that was said hurt me deeply. Cafiero had obviously become deeply unjust towards me, and I felt from the first blow that his good and brotherly friendship had been suddenly transformed into a profound, poorly masked hostility, full of insulting suspicions. If he had said that we had both committed a great fault and that we should both employ all our energy in order to sort it out, I would have understood and I would have frankly accepted it. But not cutting himself off from me, and that in a manner completely insulting to me.

On the other hand, I admit that I was quite dismayed with the new situation that this conversation made for all of us and especially in relation to my poor family. On the strength of my letters, Antonia had arrived, entirely calm and joyful, not only with the children, but with her excellent father, a good, entirely innocent old man, living only through his family, cruelly tried by the loss of his two sons, excessively sensitive to the point of becoming ill, perhaps to die at the least new misfortune that might come to strike him and his. I saw them all quiet, all happy, calling here the sister, the mother, and I thought with consternation of the despair that would take possession of Antonia and her father at the first new of the catastrophe that awaited them. I was bitterly appalled by it. The revolutionary abstraction of Cafiero would not understand it, but you, Emilio, and you, Antonia, you understand it. This was at the point that, dominated by that fixed idea so terrible for me, I disregarded, or felt much less strongly, the direct insult that was contained in the of de Cafiero. If I had been alone, at the first word I would have left to him that accursed Baronata with all that it contained and I would not have lowered myself to address a single word to him. Well, the idea of the despair and of the abyss into which I would plunge Antonia and her father made me weak. Instead of thinking of my honor, unjustly insulted by the one from whom I least awaited that insult, I thought at least to save, doubtless not myself, but my own. As for me, my resolution was made; I had decided to die. But before dying I believed I should insure the fate of my own. All those days after the 15<sup>th</sup> were a real hell for me.

I thought day and night for means of salvation for mine and by dint of thinking I found these means that would have demanded almost no new sacrifice or some very small sacrifices without any detriment for the revolution on behalf of Cafiero. But in order to realize those means, it would be necessary to be able to come to an understanding with him. But that had become impossible, because apart from the difficulty that he always experience at grasping an idea at first, and the banal obstinacy of the idea that dominated himself at the moment, there was that insulting mistrust that gushed from each of his words, gestures and looks, and paralyzed me completely. After many vain efforts, I finally took the supreme resolution that I should have taken from the first moment. I made the act by which I abandoned the Baronata to him, with all that it contained, including the cows and sick horses. But I still had the weakness to accept from him the promise of insuring in one manner or another the fate of my family after my death, which I hope will not be too far off. More than that, the day of my departure, in the morning I wrote him a letter by which I reminded him of his solemn engagements commitments that he had made with me with regard to my family, and I even suggested the means of saving the Baronata, begging him to do it if it was possible. I wanted to give him the letter myself embracing him

when I left. No sooner had I done it than he arrived. And then I had a conversation with him in the midst of which he said some words to me, he wounded me mortally, but soon after, in the presence of Emilio and Ross, we had another conversation that completed the deal. Cafiero had broken violently all the links that attached me to him.—Well, despite that I gave the letter to Emilio so that immediately after my departure, he gave it to Cafiero. Let the friends that remain to me judge if in doing so I made a great act of self-sacrifice and love, or of cowardice.

During the whole night from Locarno to Bellinzona and from Bellinzona I naturally did not even close my eyes and I thought of Cafiero. The result of all those thoughts is this: I must no longer accept anything from Cafiero, not even his care for my family after my death. I must not, and do not wish to mislead Antonia any longer, and her dignity, her pride will tell her what she must do. The blow that she receives will be terrible, but I count on the energy and the heroic strength of her character, which will sustain her, I hope. Incidentally, I have done all that I could in order to assure at least in part the fate of her family. I have written a letter, a final farewell to my brothers, who have never denied my rights to a portion of the property that we have in common and who have always asked me, in order to produce that part, to send a man invested with my full confidence and with all the full powers necessary to receive it. Thus far, I have not find that man. Now, by the attached letters, I give these full powers to Sophie Lossowska, Antonia's sister. I could never place them in better hands. She is as resolute as she is habile and her devotion to Antonia is boundless.

And now, my friends, there remains nothing for me but to die well. Farewell.

Emilio, my old and faithful friend, thank you for all your friendship toward me and for all that you will do for my family after my death. I beg you to aid with the transport of Antonia who will be persistent, I think, unless she believes she should remain a few more days to spare too great a crisis to her father. Lend her 500, 1000 francs if necessary, one will give them to you and immediately, I assure you.

As for the 2100 francs from Mr. Félix Rusca, give them to Cafiero as soon as they have been returned to you.

Antonia, do not curse me, forgive me. I shall die blessing you and our dear children.

Your devoted

M. B.

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Mémoire justificatif  
July 1874

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July 28–29, 1874, Splügen, Switzerland. Working translation by Shawn P. Wilbur.

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