

IN MEMORY OF CARLO AND NELLO ROSSELLI  
in the proceedings before the High Court against Roatta et al

Rome, March, 1945

Your Honors:

I would not want you to think it an act of indiscretion and impertinence that after the secret indictment of the High Commissioners, based entirely on concrete facts arrived at after long debate, that I should be the first lawyer to rise to speak in this hall when until now I have found it impossible to attend the hearings of this trial because of my absence from Rome.

But you ~~have~~ heard the reason for my tardy arrival several evenings ago over the American radio which brought across the ocean the voices, full of emotion but clear and strong, of Amelia Rosselli, the mother of Carlo and Nello, and of their widows, Marion and Maria. They have expressed the desire that since they could not be present themselves in this court to claim justice there should be here among the lawyers one who will speak of their dear ones--also an old friend who has no right to this great honor other than having known them twenty years ago in Florence when as young boys they were already taking those first courageous steps on the road which they followed without ever once swerving or turning away from until their death.

My task, then, in this court is not to analyse the results of the proceedings nor to prove the guilt of the accused as my more expert and more worthy colleagues, Battaglia and Comandini, will know how to do very well indeed. I am here only to talk to you about the Ros<sup>S</sup>ellis, to remind you that they were two great Italians whom Fascism has assassinated. The high moral / stature of these two shining lives will suffice in itself to show by contrast the bestial depths of the crime of the man who killed them.

The words which I am about to speak are, then, more than those of a defense attorney; they represent the performance of a solemn duty of friendship as well as civic duty. If there is any city that feels a personal interest in the trial which seeks justice against the assassins of the Rosselli brothers, that city is Florence--not the Florence which at one time was known as "the ne plus ultra of Fascism" and from which issued in the first years of the re-

Florence renewed by sorrow and proud of her freedom reconquered with the blood of the thousand citizens who fell in the streets during the battle against the Germans, the Florence which has rediscovered among the shambles of its bridges and of its towers its ancient spirit and which today counts among its recent glories those two brothers whose spirit was formed in Florence and who from there set out upon their earthly journey.

The two brothers.

I had the good fortune to know Carlo and Nello Rosselli around 1920--Carlo, born in 1899, with a doctorate from Florence in social science and from Siena in law with a thesis on "The Labor Union Movement;" Nello born in 1900, with a doctorate from Florence in humanities from Salvemini's faculty, with a thesis on "Mazzini and the Labor Movement". The titles are enough to show that already in these scholastic studies each had chosen his course. They were not old enough to take part in the war but their older brother, Aldo, an officer in the Alpine troops, was killed in 1916.

In that sad period in which Tuscany was overrun and stained with blood every day by the prowling bands of squadristi, the Rossellis, while still students or just graduated, formed the most fresh and fervid nucleus of that first group of thoughtful and determined men from which sprang the second Italian risorgimento. That movement was rather moral than political, was inspired by Mazzini, and it led, after twenty years, through great destruction and suffering toward the reconquest of liberty, a more human and fuller liberty which is the inseparable sister of social justice. The guiding star of those first meetings of some ten friends was Gaetano Salvemini who had a decisive influence in the spiritual development of the Rossellis. Marion Cave, who later became Carlo's wife, was also a member of that group. From these small beginnings, from the faith and decision of a few believing men are often born great revolutionary movements in history. And now all that concerns the Rossellis is no longer a personal affair but history.

Only one who knew the Rossellis at that time, when they were scarcely out of early adolescence yet already mature and both conscious of their common duty, can comprehend how closely from then on were they bound together, not only by

ties of blood but also by destiny. The vicissitudes of the next ten years obliged them to separate and to carry on their work in different fields, in different countries. Even that long ago they both bore on their brow the same shining mark of men destined to spend themselves utterly for an ideal. Although they differed in physical appearance and in character, we could perceive, as we knew them intimately, that they were complementary to each other; Carlo, of a broad intellect, always alert, implacable logician, consumed with a fever of translating into action the plans on which his mind unceasingly worked; Nello, more peaceful and meditative and collected, almost of a tempering and placating nature, holding himself down to the background at his brother's elbow, soothing his impetuosity. But there was upon both that same air of serenity, almost of childlike joy in the face of work and sacrifice by which certain legendary pairs of brothers have left glowing memories, men who marked with their heroic gentleness the path of our risorgimento: the Bandieras, Ruffinis, Cairolis.

In their family the Mazzinian tradition was still a living incentive. Mazzini had died in the very house of their relatives, the Nathan Rossellis, in Pisa, in that bare room where, until a few years ago some visitor ever so often entered and paused in bitter recollection--and which now is no longer. It is also wrecked by the war.

#### The mother.

Even on first sight Signora Amelia brings to mind those exemplary mothers whose sweet steadfastness appears in so many episodes of our national history to sustain and bless the sacrifice of their sons. It is impossible in speaking of her sons not to think of her, of this mother of three sons, all of whom died for Italy, she who has lived all her life following from near or far with her trepidation the progress of their destiny, from the Pal Piccolo where Aldo died fighting in 1916 to Bagnoles de L'Orne where Carlo and Nello were assassinated in 1937.

The anxieties and torments of so many years have not vanquished her but they have rendered her, as little by little the years were going by, continually more incorporeal. Her face in aging has not lost its beauty but seems to be divested of every earthly consistency, to have become almost transparent so that the spirit of courageous goodness may be seen burning within like a slender alabaster lamp

across the ocean, pure and celestial like the voices which in dreams come to us from beyond.

She was speaking not so much to urge the judges to render justice as not to wreak vengeance.

"The Culture Society"

Coming from this family, touched with this maternal light, made thoughtful even as boys by the death of the oldest brother in the war, the Rossellis in 1922 faced the prologue of the tragedy of Italy. They saw on the one hand a small minority of unbridled adventurers who brandishing their daggers launched an attack on all those principles of liberty and the rule of law which had seemed until yesterday a lasting achievement of all civilized people. Every day they saw "punitive expeditions" against the labor union headquarters and against lawyers' offices, the burning of libraries, the murders in the dead of night of defenseless citizens in their beds, the revival of torture in new forms, masquerading under jokes and impudence. But they saw also, a phenomenon even more terrifying, a majority, the great majority of Italians who were watching all this without reacting, who did not know how to respond to violence, either by the force of law or with equal counter-violence, who withdrew and took off their hats whenever they passed those little valiants who wandered around administering castor oil to "subversive characters" or painting the beards of "bolshheviks" with the national colors, as if it were a question of clever jokes. A monarchy which lent its zealous support to the betrayal of the constitution it had sworn to support, a middle class which let the parliamentary institutions be vilified which had been its strength and honor for a century, a mass of stunned workers who did not succeed in uniting themselves and in taking advantage of the vote to defend the rights of labor. On looking around about him one had the impression of being spectator at a miserable moral collapse of a whole people.

And now back to the Rossellis, while those bullies were clubbing and murdering with impunity and the great inert masses let them do it, there emerged the anguished moral problem of Italy. How had this general erosion of the whole national structure come about? Why this collapse? Why this indifference?

Before acting, it was necessary to be able to answer these perplexing questions; it was necessary to understand. To do this, as a first act of serious purpose and responsibility they promoted those meetings of friends who were also bothered by the same questions and thirsty also for understanding which gave rise to "The Culture Society" which has now been revived as it used to be differing only in this: today it bears their name.

This may seem a little thing but this was the beginning of the political life of the Rosselli brothers. I recall those first meetings with sweet melancholy. At first they were held in a law office put at our disposal during the evening by a friend. There were some ten people, not more. Later we were in a place of our own, in the street of the Santi Apostoli where the Society publicly had its rooms. I recall Carl's almost unbounded joy when we could have that place for ourselves. As if he were setting up his own home he carried over by himself the furniture, the book-cases, books, the foreign magazines. He had such an expansive vitality that he was able to give a spiritual significance even to those little practical affairs of maintenance and administration. We met in that room to read and talk over questions of politics, economics, literature, ethics. One would have prepared a brief introduction which posed the question then a most animated discussion would follow, which often kept on for hours. At every meeting ideas were clarified, resolves strengthened. On re-reading now, twenty years later, the programs of those meetings one finds among the leaders of the discussions names of men who afterwards, during the following twenty years have borne the same clarity of ideas, the same firmness of purpose in exile, in prison, in sacrifice of life.

Thus the Society lived three years, seeking to preserve the thought of a few free men while everything else was collapsing. But 31 December 1924, in the holiday atmosphere of that afternoon a squad of fascists invaded the rooms and wrecked them. From the windows which face on the Piazza Santa Trinita were flung all the furniture, books and magazines. At the foot of the column which bore at its top the statue of Justice a great funeral pyre was made of these. Passersby stood looking on with curiosity and a garbage wagon, providently dispatched beforehand by the diligent mayor of that time, waited at a respectful

distance for the auto-da-fe to be finished before clearing away the charred remains. Two days afterward the prefect ordered the dissolution of the Society of Culture because its activity "provoked the just resentment of the dominant party".

### The "Non Mollare"

From that moment there was initiated in Florence the underground battle for liberty, the battle to the death against fascism of the Rossellis and their friends. Very soon through their efforts there appeared a leaflet printed and distributed to the maqui entitled "Non Mollare" (Don't soften). It lasted for nine numbers. It ended in the arrest and trial and then with the exile of Salvemini.

But that little pamphlet was truly the forerunner of a great political movement.

The future historian who seeks to reconstruct from documents the history of Italian political thought during twenty years of fascism will certainly not be able to find evidence of it in the official press, all equally monotonous in their subservience. But he must realize that the twenty-year-old breach between the free press which was obliged to cease publication after 1925 and the new free press which sprang up only in the last few months was filled in by these subterranean currents of the underground press through which the heart of the true Italy has never ceased to beat.

"Non mollare" was the first link in this chain. From this beginning, the continuity was maintained for twenty years up to the partisan press which was spread through all regions of Italy in the last period of the resistance against the Germans. And the message was always the same.

"Non mollare" is closely tied up with the story of the Rosselli brothers not only because they were the most spirited editors of it but also because its title was for the Rossellis a plan of life, the motto of their political action. Don't give up; that is don't compromise, don't slacken, don't make concessions, don't grant indulgence either toward others or, above all, to yourself. It is not enough to have an idea; one must live it, suffer for it, spend oneself utterly for it, with a religious fidelity make oneself every act conform to it, be ready to give all one's energies for it, one's possessions and,

old ruling class which was putrefying in the blind attack on its privileges and was destroying itself in indifference and civil impotence, the Rossellis had rediscovered, and so many young men with them, the freshness and nobility of life, a kind of intoxication life gives when it is conceived not as a restricted egoism but as a giving of oneself, as a continuous reaffirmation of human solidarity, as a daily exercise of uniting actions with ideas. It was, in substance, the return to the moral creed of Mazzini, "thought and action", rediscovered as a unique and consoling certitude in the midst of general catastrophe, that creed which gives human existence a sense of tranquility which transcends daily events and which keeps martyrs from turning back in the face of death.

"Non mollare"--don't soften--and indeed the men of that group did not soften. Gaetano Salvemini did not soften, Salvemini who when the trial was hardly finished resigned from his chair at the university from which he could no longer teach in freedom and went abroad to continue the battle. Ernesto Rossi and Nello Traquandi did not soften, they who soon thereafter were condemned to fifteen years imprisonment preferred to pay the penalty until the end rather than beg for mercy from the tyrant and then when the sentence was finished to be voluntarily placed in confinement again until the fall of Fascism for refusing stubbornly to sign a retraction of their faith. Enrico Bocci did not ~~give up,~~ <sup>soften,</sup> who in June 1943, surprised by the Germans while sending a radio message for the underground, suffered terrible torture without revealing the names of his companions and was deported to the north where nothing has been heard from him since. Carlo and Nello Rosselli did not soften, who for twelve years, from 1925 to 1937, through exiles, trials, prison, and dramatic escapes were constantly in Italy and outside of Italy, on the front line in the struggle against Fascism.

#### The political work of Carlo

I am not going to speak of that which in thought and action was the great political work of Carlo Rosselli; that has its place now in the European history of these last twenty years and is today for us a spur to action.

In the title of ~~this~~ <sup>the</sup> book, Liberal Socialism, which he wrote in confinement and published in France in 1930, as in the motto of the revolutionary movement

he founded in the same period, Giustizia e Libertà, the essence of the political problem <sup>(there</sup> is already formulated in synthesis) which this battered world is laboriously commencing to solve. No one else knew how to show with such clarity the weakness of Marxist materialism in its underestimation of moral forces and how to point out the life-giving power of socialism. No one else was able to study fascism with such breadth of historical vision and to see in it not a crisis brought on by the coup of a faction but rather an acute manifestation of century-old rot of our nation and at the same time the Italian expression of a broader European and world-wide travail from which would have to come a new civilization based on the moral value of work.

And neither shall I speak to you of Carlo Rosselli, man of action, in whom the fervor of thought was all, a revolutionary and fighting fever. His most extensive studies served him only as a preparation for the great political battle of which he seemed destined to become the guiding spirit and leader. Of the audacity with which he and Ferruccio Parri planned the escape from Italy of Filippo Turati in 1925; of the adventurous enterprise with which in 1929 he escaped, along with Lussu and Fausto Nitti, from the confinement on Lipari Island; of the part taken by him in 1936 in the Spanish civil war as commander of Italian volunteers together with Mario Angeloni--of these things Lussu, Garosci, Pacciardi, men of his own quality who were near him in these enterprises, have spoken to you and have duly borne witness in this court.

#### Carlo before the Judges

But I, your honors, in order that the moral loftiness and spiritual gentleness of this man of action may always be better remembered desire to call your attention to that feeling for human dignity and also, if I may say it, of poesy which animated all his political writings. There was always at the base of them, even in the most high-spirited polemics, a natural accent of loyalty and of generosity, a vibration of contained and reasoned passion which gave to them in their simplicity (and we feel it even more on rereading them today) a solemn tone as of prayer, a force of conviction which could well be called civil religion, the same tone as in the writings of Mazzini.

I will not read here, that prophetic article of his of 1933 on "The recurring war" which upon being reread today, when history has fully borne out his



predictions for the present, leaves one astonished with the feeling of having come face to face with a prodigy. I should like to read, because we are in a judiciary court here, a passage of the speech which he used in his defense in 1930 at the Swiss court in Lugano.

Twice in his life, which never knew repose, political vicissitudes brought him to bar as a criminal; and twice before the judges the accused became accuser. The first time was when, after the expatriation of Filippo Turati, he returned to Italy to appear with Parri before the judges at Savona to answer for having organized and effected that escape. That trial was transformed by the deportment of the accused into their triumph. The second time was when, after the flight over Milan of the aviator Giovanni Bassanesi, which was organized in Switzerland by the "Giustizia e Libertà" movement, Carlo Rosselli and Alberto Tarchiani were accused of having violated federal laws by making preparations for that flight. Now, confronting those judges Carlo Rosselli delivered a brief defense which it is well to reread here, to purify the solemn air of this trial and to measure by comparison the stature of the accused ones who today, your honors, stand here before you.

Consider: the sorry wretches who sit today before this bar were all fervent fascists in the period in which fascism triumphed, or at least they exerted themselves without stint to make believe that they were. To obtain honors and promotions and riches and impunity for their thefts, they vied with each other in disguising themselves in orbace and in not disdaining to sing # at command<sup>A</sup> the fateful hymns of revolution when all official assemblies were reduced to black shirted choral societies. But today when fascism is fallen and when they are accused of having collaborated, there is not one of this sad lot who is able to make a gesture or to say a word to vindicate that faith of his, to defend that regime which nourished them, to affirm his gratitude and faithfulness to that leader before whom they then prostrated themselves, ready to kiss the ground he tread upon. Today, to save themselves they speak with deprecation and scorn of their one-time faith, offering the miserable excuse that they had been insincere, a cheap welching which is more disgusting than their crimes.

But let us take a breath of pure air and hear how Carlo Rosselli spoke

"The state which we dreamed of is the state which you have made for yourselves, people of Ticino....

"In Italy now freedom--all freedoms--are dead. The people are divided into two factions; on one side a small armed minority which imposes itself on the other, an immense majority which is languishing in physical and moral misery. No possibility of legal opposition is left us. We have no longer any right to criticize or to control....

"I had a home; they have destroyed it. I had a newspaper; they have suppressed it. I had a chair in the university; I had to give it up. I had, as I have today, some ideas, dignity, an ideal; to defend them I had to go to prison. I had some teachers, some friends--Amendola, Matteotti, Gobetti; they have killed them.

"Unfortunately my experience is that of countless companions of mine who, for loving her too much, have been driven from Italy.

"Our crime--that for which fascism cannot pardon us--is that of not submitting, of not bowing the head in the face of so great tragedy, of continuing to struggle. We continue to struggle."

These were the words, o accused fascists, which were addressed to another court by that antifascist you have killed.

Nello's Part  
NELLO'S PART

But, your honors, I have the obligation of telling you something of Nello, because of him, gentle figure of the background, less has been said than of Carlo. But it is right that it should be known who he was also.

Some of you may have thought, because Nello did not figure in the more dramatic episodes of the life of Carlo and because he appeared just at the last minute to die at his side, that he was only a tranquil and solitary man of thought who had left to his pugnacious brother the difficult risks of the political struggle and for himself had preferred the comfortable retreat of the libraries and archives. But this idea would not be correct. Nello also assumed his part in the battle and perhaps not the easiest part, either: to remain in Italy, to breathe the air of fascism without letting himself be asphyxiated by it; to spin there silently, without impatience and without qualms, the threads of the underground resistance. While Carlo, still free in France, had been able

to undertake the task which was most risky--but also more intoxicating in its fight in the open--to Nello was handed the more obscure but equally manly task of fighting fascism by living in the midst of it, of experiencing the atmosphere of servitude, of supporting disgusting contacts without being discouraged, of restraining outbursts and invectives, in short of not abandoning his sorrowing country and of remaining day after day in contact with its oppressed people.

I remember having received about 1927 a letter from Salvemini, also at that time exiled in France. From the free country in which he was living he confessed to pitying and admiring at the same time the determination of those who, no matter how determined they were to fight fascism, believed they could do it without leaving the country. And the advice which he gave them was this: "resist in silence; <sup>wait;</sup> ~~with;~~ don't make any useless gestures; take care to 'save the soul'". This phrase "save the soul", a watchword of his and those near him, was the mission which Nello assumed by remaining in Italy. And if apparently in those years he was occupied only in a history of the Risorgimento it is certain that in the themes of his choices--Mazzini, Bakunin, Pisacane--and in his manner of treating them, one could always read between the lines, translated into historical terms, the urgency of the same national and social problems, the convulsion of the reality of today which broke out in Carlo's writings in open political polemic.

The work of Carlo Rosselli would not have been as full and strong as it was if he had not had near him a companion like Marion who was also a confident and inspiration, but also if he had not left in Italy a brother like Nello who was also a friend and counsellor. Twice Nello also was sentenced to prison. But then it seemed that they lost sight of him and considered him at length as a harmless investigator of old papers. And after some years, for certain research in the archives in London, they even gave him a passport. Thus, he was able to make discreetly a liaison between the antifascism of the exiles and that within the country. When he went to France he took to Carlo precise data drawn from actual life in Italy; when he returned to Italy he brought back to us the hopes and proposals of the exiles in France. The writings of Carlo always appeared to be most precisely informed on the Italian situation,

as if he had personally been present. In reality he was present there through the prudent and sagacious vigilance of his younger brother. In each enterprise of Carlo's, even in the most dangerous, the faithfulness and understanding of Nello seemed to appear in the shadow; even from afar he never ceased to exercise on the tumultuous life of the older brother a consoling, almost paternal, protection.

Of him, after his disappearance Salvemini wrote these words:

"Nello was also a convinced and irreducible antifascist. Advised many times by friends to establish himself outside Italy he never would do so; he said that it was necessary for someone to remain in Italy to be an example of not giving up. It was his duty to do it. The two brothers, associated in life and in death, symbolize the two antifascist Italies: the one which was prepared in silence and the one which fought openly. In its purest elements Italy never surrendered to the faits accomplis.

#### Nello in Florence.

Of this clarifying and inspiring effect that Nello exercised upon all who had the chance to be with him in those years, not only on his youthful associates but also on the mature ones, I myself from my fortunate experience can be witness.

In the last years after Hitler's ascent to power and the Ethiopian escapade when the rumble of catastrophe<sup>ph</sup> was heard approaching nearer and nearer and fascist oppression was becoming ever heavier, our group of friends used to leave early every Sunday from the city resounding with howls of the compulsory assemblies and took the road for the mountains in search of our lost liberty.

Every Sunday a new destination: ~~one day~~ some<sup>one</sup> of those old spots of the Tuscan countryside, every one of which has its distinctive physiognomy like a living face. All of us, without saying so, carried with us on those excursions the secret melancholy of one who on making a visit to one of his loved ones thinks that perhaps that is the last time he may see him and cannot succeed in shaking off ~~the~~ this dire presentiment. "War is coming; war will come..." admonished Carlo from afar; there was already on those smiling hills a prophecy of destruction. But <sup>the presence</sup> Nello was with us on those jaunts and/of him, blonde and laughing, sufficed to shed on all of us older than he a shining aura of serenity and confidence. At that time, in the last two years which he passed in Florence before going to die in France, all our memories are illuminated by his smile; even in photographs

from a medieval loggia or among the battlements of an old tower seems to radiate hope and youth on those old landscapes.

And now those scenes are no more. The towers are fallen, the loggias<sup>a</sup> are crumbled. And Nello also is no more. The same hurricane has destroyed them all.  
The end of Nello and Carlo.

The brutal and sudden voice which brought us that announcement echoes forever in my heart.

Carlo was back in Paris from the Spanish war, wounded and suffering; then, in order to heal flebitis which kept him from returning to the fight, he was in Bagnoles for a cure. Nello talked to us about him on our Sunday gatherings; from the tone of his letters one could see that he was vexed and impatient from that enforced rest. It could be expected that he would not resist waiting for recovery and he would return to fight before being well again. Then Signora Amelia thought of going to France to be near him, to encourage him to be patient. This, I believe, was in April of 1927. But then she became sick also, and then it was ~~Nello~~ Nello who decided to go. He asked for a passport, in spite of the fact that we tried to deter him; and they gave it to him with unaccustomed alacrity. Perhaps, on thinking back on it afterwards, it was a question of a trap; perhaps, when he left Florence he was already condemned.

He told us goodbye with a trace of sadness in his eyes, for only a few days before his fourth child had been born. And at the end of May he left to rejoin Carlo; the hour sounded for meeting each other in eternity.

And in the afternoon of June 10, the anniversary of the death of Matteotti, from my window I heard a newsboy ~~calling~~ the sensational headline: Rosselli brothers are killed.

Then for a week in all the papers the infamous game of hypotheses artfully put out by Rome to confuse public opinion: Who had killed them? Political crime or deed of common banditry? Revenge of the Spanish? Rivalry among Italians abroad or jealousy of French politicians?

But in Florence, where that news stunned us like a blow from a club, the accounts in the papers were no longer looked at. "Who had killed them?" No one asked himself this question. Who had killed Matteotti? Who had killed Amendola? Who had killed Gobetti? Who had killed Gramsci?

Matteotti in 1934: "It was inevitable that the archetype antifascist Matteotti should die, a superlative hero. As Amendola and Gobetti had to die in their turn... As Rossi, Gramsci, Bauer and many other Matteotti's who are being formed in these years will have to die if we do not save them... All characters, types of mind which are the opposite of the Mussolinian character and sensibility... Mussolini perceives, know that those are his true enemies. He has the scent of the enemy. Invincible with men of his stamp, singularly impotent with men beyond his mental horizon. Therefore he suppresses them..."

Therefore he suppressed even the Rosselli brothers, as Carlo had foreseen.

Why they killed them.

The occasion for killing the Rossellis arose from the Spanish war. "By assassinating Carlo Rosselli", wrote Salvemini then, "Mussolini wished, besides freeing himself from his most active and feared enemy, to avenge above all the difficulties encountered by him in Spain on the man who was the prime instigator of these difficulties". But Spain was only the opportunity: "Today in Spain, tomorrow in Italy" Carlo had promised from the Barcelona radio on 13 November 1936. But with this promise he had set the last seal on his doom.

The assassination of the Rossellis was coldly prepared by the fascist general staff not only because, as long as fascism should stand, they were among its most <sup>e</sup>fery and implacable enemies, but also because they could represent throughout Italy the sanest and steadiest forces of renewal after the fall of fascism.

Consideration should be given to this: to the premeditated dearth of men that fascism wished to leave after itself; of the <sup>v</sup>iminal proposal of taking from Italy at the end of the dictatorship all means of salvation and rebirth.

In this difficult hour which our country passes through, all the problems are summed up in one stinging question: Where are the men for tomorrow? And from time to time in seeking to answer this question a murmured regret comes to us: If Amendola, <sup>if</sup> Gramsci, if the Rossellis were here. This happens in Italy not because the dead are transfigured and become greater by the sole fact of being dead and seem to be shrouded in our memories in virtues superior to those they actually had in life, but because in Italy fascism truly knew how in those twenty years to recognize the best men whom it was absolutely necessary to kill off, one by one, like the most stalwart oaks which the wood-cutter blazes before felling, in order to leave our politi-

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Only now, after the methodical devastation of the Germans has passed over our countryside, can we appreciate at its true value the tactics of destruction of men as well as things with which fascism preceded them. The scientific destruction wrought by the Nazis wreckers did not, like the vandalism of barbarian invasions, have the merely bestial aim of preying, of enriching the vandals, of satisfying their basest instincts, but that, even more perverse and premeditated, of erasing forever the industrial and agricultural resources, the means of study and culture, the artistic monuments of the people to prevent them rising after the scourge and starting again on the road toward the future. Everyone of us has seen with his own eyes in Tuscany the studied applications of this ingenious system: machines with the gears dashed to pieces one by one by blows of a hammer; libraries where in all the works of more than one volume, one--only one--has been taken out to ruin the set; collections of art in which every canvas has been obliquely ripped with the jab of a bayonette; avenues of cypress in which a deep gash has been left in every trunk so that they would dry up and die and remain standing.

But fascism was no better. In its criminal delirium, the ephemeral tyranny dreamed of dragging with itself into the abyss, almost to vindicate itself for not being immortal, an entire people with not only its riches and its monuments but also with its dignity, its honor, its best men, so that in future centuries history would accord to fascism at least this boast: that when it perished, together with it into the same vortex perished Italy. As certain Oriental despots who on the point of death had their wives' and slaves' throats slit so that they would follow him into the tomb, the burbid fascist sultan had for twenty years arranged everything to ~~the~~ immolate with him in his grave the entire Italian people. In this design, to give him his due, he knew his business: when one hears it said that he was a great connoisseur of men, it must be admitted that he certainly had this quality when it was a question of murdering men. Then, without making any mistakes, he knew how to choose the best, and the Rossellis were among these.

You have not succeeded.

You then, o accused fascists, have by killing the Rossellis been the executors of this design which aimed at the integrated and methodical destruction of the country; you have worked with the same annihilating skill of the German spoilers who when the army is retreating reach the ultimate in perfecting butcheries and