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Life sentence asked for the former Eternit tycoon in Casale: "Aware that it would have been a massacre"

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"Life sentence for Stephan Schmidheiny." Here it is, after a year and a half of hearings, the request of the magistrate Gianfranco Colace in the Eternit bis trial that is being celebrated against the former owner of the factory that operated in Casale Monferrato for decades, until 1986. The maxi trial that is being celebrated in Novara brought to the courtroom the story of 392 victims including only a part of the company's direct workers. There are also citizens who lived within a 10 km radius of the factory and who fell ill over time and then died.

Eternit bis, the prosecutor who asked for life imprisonment Stephan Schmidheiny: "He worked in Casale like a colonialist"

"There are 392 cases, but there are 392 families, children who have lost their parents and have not been able to study, mothers, brothers, sisters, wives, husbands. One could say – the magistrate explained in the courtroom – that we are faced with a massacre due to asbestos: no, gentlemen, judges: this is a massacre of a man for which Mr. Schmidheiny is also responsible". The entrepreneur, who has never attended any hearing, is liable for voluntary homicide with possible malice. My colleague Maria Giovanna Compare, prosecutor of Vercelli who supported Colace in the investigation and in the debate before the Novara judges, lined up a series of numbers. In the years covered by the investigation (1975-1986) "the same concentration of asbestos measured in the industrial area of Milan was found in agricultural areas miles away from the Casale plant.

Even for the wives of employees there was an 18 times higher risk of falling ill than the average. Whoever lived with an Eternit worker for 10 years increased his percentage of getting sick by 9 times higher than any other individual". Again in 2001 it will be ascertained that "for those who have worked at Eternit, the risk of falling ill with mesothelioma increases by 50 times, for those who have lived between 500 meters and 1.5 km from the factory, it increases 22 times until it decreases only after 10 Km from the factory".

In the records of this investigation ended up "real manuals of disinformation and mystification of the real risks of falling ill due to progressive exposure to asbestos" explained the magistrate outlining Schmidheiny as "a colonialist entrepreneur" among those responsible for a massacre "which is not the massacre of asbestos, but also that of a man who has juggled between awareness of the harmfulness of the product and the survival of the market".

"He was aware of the conditions in which the company was. He did not know the names and the number of people who would have died, but he stubbornly and lucidly carried on the business by accepting the eventuality of a massacre, he joined it".

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(<https://www.lastampa.it/cronaca/2023/02/10/news/chiesto-lergastolo-per-lex-magnate-di-eternit-a-casale-consapevole-che-sarebbe-12635340/>)

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