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"Sick because of electromagnetic fields"

The Court of Appeal, after a lawsuit by the CGIL, recognizes the occupational disease of three former Enel employees. But they are all already deceased

The Court of Appeal of Florence has recognized a great victory to the Inca-Cgil of the province of Lucca and to the workers. In a judgment that has so far been unique in its kind, the existence of an occupational disease that has never been recognised before has been established. The assisted, victims of this disease, thus obtain the right to receive compensation proportionate to the degree of impairment, equal to 85% of the arrears in addition to the right to a survivor's pension granted to the spouse.

"The story - explains the CGIL of Lucca - begins in 2011 when one of our assistants, at the time 62 years old, turned to the Inca CGIL Patronage of Marlia to obtain assistance in recognizing what he considered a disease caused by his previous work. It was micromolecular multiple myeloma, according to him derived from exposure to waves and electromagnetic fields generated by high voltage pylons. In fact, the man had worked for Enel from 1974 to 2005: over the years he had been involved in the installation and maintenance of telephone equipment and infrastructures, power plants, teleoperation and remote control machines, transmission equipment and coupling devices with conveyed waves, VHF radio transmission equipment, UHF radio bridges and SHF radio bridges. The conveyed wave (OCV) apparatuses had been mainly installed in high-voltage power lines, in situations of presence of a strong electromagnetic field. Commissioning, testing and maintenance of the radio bridges had taken place mainly at repeaters, where numerous VHF, UHF and SHF transceivers were installed, which locally cause a strong electromagnetic pollution".

The former Enel worker had therefore requested, through the help of the then head of the Inca office in Marlia, Patrizia Bertoncini and the medical examiner Dr.

Silvia Baldi, the recognition of the aforementioned occupational disease, but saw it rejected. He was thus forced to resort to a judicial action, promoted with the patronage of the lawyer Carla Genovali before the court of Lucca. Here his cause was combined with that of the widows of two colleagues who, like him, had worked for most of their lives for Enel, and who in the meantime had died of similar illnesses.

"Inail, however, continued to challenge the claims of the offended parties and, despite two expert reports (one environmental and the other scientific) favorable to the arguments of the three workers, the Court rejected the application based on a third negative expert opinion (medical examiner). The case was then brought before the Court of Appeal of Florence, after all three cases were closely followed by Dr. Baldi".

The Court of Appeal of Florence, in front of the documentation filed and above all in the light of the expert reports, both environmental and scientific, previously ignored, has given for granted the existence of the causal link. He then commissioned a new technical consultant to assess the extent of the damage reported by the three workers, who recognized the existence of the occupational diseases reported. The Court of First Instance therefore ordered Inail to pay the compensation due.

"It was the first jurisprudential recognition - concludes the CGIL - inherent in blood diseases caused by exposure to electromagnetic waves. The only bitterness that remains to the operators of the Patronato Inca Cgil, to the medical examiner Silvia Baldi and to the lawyer Carla Genovali, is due to the impossibility of sharing the satisfaction for this result with their historical assistant. Unfortunately, in fact, shortly before the delivery of the sentence, the promoter of the case died due to the occupational disease reported".