

## Interview with Pasquale Antonio Baldocci: Gaetano Martino (Scy-Chazelles, 4 April 2007)

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[Pasquale Antonio Baldocci] Gaetano Martino played a role — and he was a doctor and a physiology professor, who had never been involved in diplomacy. Yet it was he who proposed a way out of this crisis. He was, of course, helped enormously by Spaak who, as you are aware, had been appointed Chairman of a working party that had the task of reviving the integration process, and who was, in my view, the main negotiator of the Rome Treaties. Martino, who came from Messina and was very attached to his town, wanted to pay homage to it by inviting his colleagues to this conference, which gave rise to this renewal process, this revival of European integration, which in turn, one year and some months later, led to the signing of the treaties. Therefore in Italy, the governments, which were Christian Democrat governments or governments in coalition with Social Democrats and Liberals, were very favourable; they saw these new negotiations and this revival as a means to show that Italy counted for something in this process, and that is why, I believe, Rome was chosen as the site for the signing of the treaties.

Martino, therefore, did an excellent job. He was my minister when I embarked on this career. He was an extremely elegant man; his dress-style was rather English. A strange thing about him was that when he spoke Italian, he had a very strong Sicilian accent; yet when he spoke English, he no longer had it. Funnily enough, it is because there are certain similarities, especially in the way the letter 't' is pronounced, between English and the Sicilian dialect. This applied for Martino, and we liked Martino because he was a minister who was not really a politician, and also because he at once showed that he had a liking for diplomats, which we were. When he left the government because of a governmental crisis, he called us together to take his leave of the Ministry and he promised to write a book defending diplomats and diplomacy generally. He told us that the book would end with the following observation: 'Diplomats and doctors have a great deal in common, because it is much easier to malign them than to do without them.' We liked that very much, and then, just a few months afterwards, he died suddenly; he was suffering from an illness that had appeared without warning and it removed him completely from the scene of those early days in the history of Europe.