

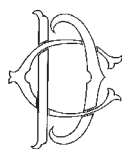
CAMERA DEI DEPUTATI

Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry into the Cermis Tragedy

Final Report

Approved by the Committee at the session of 7 February 2001

This translation is not an official text



XIII Legislature

INTRODUCTION

With a resolution of 19 October 1999 the Chamber of Deputies established the Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry into the Cermis Tragedy, with the task of fully clarifying the events, causes and responsibilities at all levels of the accident of 3 February 1998. On that day, a US Marine Corps aircraft, deployed to Aviano for Operation Deliberate Guard in Bosnia, severed the cables of the cablecar at Cermis, near Cavalese in the Trentino region, causing the gondola to fall and the death of the 20 passengers aboard. The Committee was also charged with evaluating the adequacy of the rules governing military training flights in Italy and of verifying the control procedures and systems for such flight activity. The Committee, composed of 25 deputies from all political forces, began work on 9 February 2000, conducting an intense schedule of hearings and missions to construct a complete picture of the facts and the measures taken and to investigate fully the issues that emerged during the study of the documentation examined during the inquiry.

The Committee heard the testimony of the representatives of the public prosecutor's offices that argued the prosecution case before the Criminal Court of Trento and the Military Courts of Padua and Bari; the representatives of the Government in place at the time of the accident, the local communities and a number of citizens' associations; and the military authorities involved. The Committee visited the Aviano airbase in order to ascertain how the new procedures adopted following the tragedy were being implemented and went to Trento to gather additional information on low-altitude flights in the valleys of Trentino. Following initial diplomatic contacts, the Committee also conducted a mission to Washington to hear the top US authorities in the sector, verify the state of the measures taken and present a number of requests instrumental to the inquiry. The Committee concluded its work on 7 February 2001 with the approval of the final report.

With a decision approved at the same sitting of 7 February 2001, the Committee also ordered the translation of the final report into English and German in order to enable extensive distribution to the citizens of the countries of origin of the victims.

This volume is being published in implementation of that decision, with the proviso that the work is an unofficial translation, requested by the Office for Inquiry, Oversight and Control Committees of the Chamber of Deputies. The final report in Italian, which is the authentic version, was published in the parliamentary records of the 13th Parliament and can be consulted in a publication edited by the Chamber of Deputies in implementation of another decision of the Committee of Inquiry. The latter publication also contains the verbatim reports of the hearings, the rulings of the Italian judicial authorities that examined the events and facts covered by the inquiry and the main documentation of the courts martial conducted in the United States against the two US pilots involved in the accident.