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Policemen that were “too good-hearted” go to trial, after their commander reported them.

Pubblicato: Giovedì 27 Ottobre 2011

Yesterday (Wednesday 7 April), the trial began against Andrea Collauto and Fausto Sartorato, the two local policemen from Busto Arsizio, who were accused of neglecting their official duties, after their commanding officer, Alessandro Casale, reported them for not fining two street traders in January 2008. The Public Prosecutor, Luca Gaglio, and the defence lawyer of Collauto and Sartorato, Alberto Cova, presented the list of witnesses to the court, which was presided over by Judge Toni Adet Novik.

Collauto and Sartorato were charged with failing to prevent a florist, not in possession of a paper copy of the necessary permits, which he did have, from entering the market, and the second episode concerned a street trader, who sold his fruit and vegetables from his lorry, in the area of Malpensafiere. The street trader had already appeared in the local news because of a number of self-inflicted injuries following the numerous fines he had received because he often did not have the necessary permits. The street trader was apparently displaying his goods on the public highway, outside the allowed times, and the two policemen did not fine him.

The lawyer Cova was in no doubt about the good faith of his clients. “We can prove that both charges are unfounded,” he said, shortly after leaving the court. “In the first case, the two officers checked that the florist had a regular permit to be able to sell at the market, and in the second, there weren’t the specific conditions to warrant fining the man.”

Although Andrea Collauto is no longer a local police officer, Fausto Sartorato is still employed at the police station in Busto Arsizio. “The report by our commanding office has also created a nasty environment in the workplace,” Sartorato said. “I hope this trial ends soon. I have a clear conscience, because I know that both my former colleague and I acted correctly.” The verdict will not be very quick, however, because the crime that Collauto and Sartorato are charged with, is not one of those defined as a priority by the recent security package. The next hearing has been set for 15 December, when the witnesses will be heard.

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redazione@varesenews.it

