

## VareseNews

### **While the workers are on the side of the companies, politics is out of it.**

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Even the workers, who put their muscles, blood and lungs to keep the assembly lines going, have understood that without investments and economic growth, the future of Italian manufacturing is in serious danger.

Over the last few days, the markets have given a clear signal for Italy, increasing the spread of the Italian government bonds, in reaction to the negative predictions concerning our GDP in the next two years.

When the workers at Whirlpool marched along Via Pietro Nenni (one of the noble fathers of Italian socialism), they remained silent for a few minutes. Maybe because they knew in their hearts, that the demonstration was not against the “bosses”, but for the employment that is being lost despite the “bosses”.

“If the companies continue to close,” explained Matteo Berardi, of the trade union FIOM CGIL, “the region will have to do something, and all the forces, not only those of the unions, will have to work together to help the recovery. We are demonstrating also for the companies that are penalised by a tactic that is not helping the recovery, just look at the tax burden, which is unsustainable for everybody.”

The march headed for Biandronno town hall, where Mayor Antonio Calabretta, a former employee of the American multinational, was waiting for the Whirlpool employees. The Mayor politely welcomed the union representatives and employees, inviting them to sit down in the council hall. “We’ve set up a roundtable to discuss the crisis situation in the province,” said Calabretta, “but not all of my mayor colleagues agree with this proposal. Although there is little we local administrators can do, the council is always a point of reference for anyone in difficulty. What I can do is call on our MPs.”

Like other administrators in the province, particularly those of the Northern League, the Mayor of Biandronno, with the support of the centre-right majority (Northern League, the PDL and Electoral List “For Biandronno Cassinetta”), is looking at nearby Switzerland as an example of the promised land for the businessman overwhelmed by Roman bureaucracy. Some companies in the North, attracted by the advantageous

conditions, have already crossed the border, settling in Canton Vallese.

Calabretta continued, "I'm in favour of new companies being established in structures that already exist, as Whirlpool indicated in their latest reorganisation plan. I wouldn't be in favour of building new industrial premises."

"We're all in it together," say the union representatives at Whirlpool, in Cassinetta, including the politicians, perhaps ignoring the fact that, in a such a delicate situation, the role of politics, at all levels, is marginal, to say the least, which was confirmed by Calabretta himself, who, when asked if he was aware of a bill called "Cresci Lombardia" (Grow Lombardy), more commonly known as the Small Business Act in Lombardy, which was created to help small and medium-sized companies, was surprised. "This is the first I've heard of it," he said.

And yet, the bill (whether good or bad), which was promoted during the trips of the itinerant regional councillor Andrea Gibelli (Northern League), should be the starting point for a politician who wants to tackle the issue of the future of the economy of Varese Province where, according to the Varese Chamber of Commerce, approximately 64,000 micro and small companies are surviving, in anticipation of better times. Apparently, though, none of the five regional councillors who represent this province in Milan, three of whom are politically close to Calabretta (Luciana Ruffinelli and Giangiacomo Longoni of the Northern League, Rienzo Azzi of the PDL) has seen fit to inform the Mayor of Biandronno.

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