



## June 26, 1959: plane crash

### Report of Olgiate Olona mayor Carlo Ferrari sent to Varese Prefecture on July 2, 1959

I feel the duty and the need to report to yrs. Most Dear Sir what follows: As soon as I heard about the plane crash I rushed to the site of the accident. The Municipal Secretary, in obedience to the Prefectural Circular No. 3568 – Cabinet Div. of 10/22/1957 - had warned the Air Rescue Centre of Linate. Also the Carabinieri of the competent Station of Castellanza and the Fire Brigade command were alerted. Both Carabinieri and Fire Brigade promptly rushed: when I arrived on site I found them already busily at work. I attended the fire fighting operations (unfortunately without effective result for the ill-fated travelers) until Mr. Pretore of Busto Arsizio - arrived at the scene - gave instructions (at about 8.30 p.m.) to leave the corpses as they were until the next morning at six o'clock. Rain continued to fall and I went home to change my clothes being soaked with rain. The next morning at 4 I was notified by Municipal Secretary by phone that Mr. Public Prosecutor of Busto Arsizio would have come back to the site at about 5 that same morning. I went back to the scene accompanied by the Secretary at 4.30 a.m. I gave instructions to call the Parson in order to agree with him about the transportation of the corpses that would be extracted from the wreckage and the funeral ceremonies, after the approval of the Judicial Authority. The Parson arrived at about 7 a.m. and to my surprise he replied that all was already arranged with Your and HE the Cardinal consent on the initiative of Busto Arsizio mayor Mr. Rossini, as meaning that he assumed the burden and the honor. The severity of the disaster, the respect for the dead and the presence of their relatives prompted me not to do my complaints. I remained at the site of the disaster with the Health Officer and the Municipal Secretary all the day in order to fulfill my duty as Mayor and to keep myself available to the Judicial; I gave instructions to the Health Officer to assist the removal of the corpses; I organized a team of volunteers that helped the very admirable militants of the Red Cross <sup>1</sup>; I arranged for the welcome at the town Hall and for the first consolation to the relatives of the dead; with the resources available I arranged the service of traffic regulation which was really very intense in these days because of the accident. The town Council – the minority included – attended the funeral rite celebrated in the Basilica of St. John in Busto Arsizio where our Municipal gonfalon

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<sup>1</sup> A List of the volunteers who cooperated in the works of June 27, 1959, that is those who formed the team mentioned by Mayor Ferrari and who engaged themselves with pity and abnegation in the tragic emergency, is conserved in the historic Archives of Olgiate Olona Municipality: Olgiate Olona resident Ugo Cerana of Ernesto, Francesco Pigozzi of late Luigi, Silvano Galbersanini of late Giuseppe, Renzo Ciceri of Pietro and Giuseppe Mauri of via Brennero 6a street, as well as Giovanni Croci of Busto Arsizio and Oreste Cucchi of Milan (in the list it is stated "only for one hour"). On July 15, 1959 the Mayor sent them an official letter of thanks expressing the thanks and appreciation of municipal Administration.

and a wreath of flowers were sent. The body of Mrs. Maria Fermi Sacchetti, sister of the late atomic scientist Enrico Fermi, was buried at the expense of this Municipality in the local cemetery, by the express will of her children. This municipal Administration intends to erect a memorial monument on the site where the disaster happened. But I feel obliged to tell to yrs. Most Dear Sir that this community and the municipal Administration - by appreciating anyway the generous impulse of Busto Arsizio Mayor in all its fullness - are commenting unfavorably and with resentment on the decision not to leave the honor to comply with what was in the duty and competence of the town of Olgiate Olona and its Administration in these painful circumstances. The Parish Church and the cemetery of Olgiate Olona are extremely vast and in a position to welcome even though a considerable number of corpses; therefore, without absolutely detracting from the great merit of what was done by the Committee set up on purpose in the City of Busto Arsizio, please let me repeat, yrs. Most Dear Sir The Prefect, together with this community, that also Olgiate Olona could have managed to fulfill this pitiful duty. Please believe, yrs. Most Dear Sir The Prefect, that my complaint has not to be attributed only to my justified surprise for the fact that the opinion of the head of a Municipality was not listened to before subtracting a task to him (the fact that he was justifiably absent at that time has no relevance), but especially for the specific duty that I think I have to let yrs. Most Dear Sir know the feeling of bitterness that the fact has produced in this generous community. With my higher treats, Carlo Ferrari.