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Dolci and the mafia

by Sumner M. Rosen

To the Editors:

The only Italian who regularly confronts the Mafia in Sicily, known to Americans, is Danilo Dolci. His work over many years has attracted international attention. He has been suggested more than once for the Nobel Peace Prize. Luigi Barzini's review (*NYR*, February 17) fails to mention him. Perhaps space was the problem. Perhaps Dolci does not impress Barzini, or is not known to him. Readers and admirers of Dolci would like to know more, from someone who clearly knows a great deal. Supporting Dolci is one of the few concrete means of response to the problem available to non-Italians; how would Mr. Barzini have us act?

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Luigi Barzini replies:

To be sure, Danilo Dolci is a great man whom we all admire. Some call him a lay saint. He is also a good writer. He has provoked a vast international wave of sympathy. While the results of his initiatives in Sicily must not be underestimated, they have substantially left things as they always were. Here and there he managed to defeat some Mafia groups, to persuade some people of their rights, and to put pressure on a few politicians. But the problem is too vast and ancient, too deeply rooted in the Island's way of life, for a "foreigner" like Danilo Dolci really to push it toward an eventual solution. The proof of this is the fact that the Mafiosi do not interfere with him. He is, in his own way, both respected and *un uomo rispettato*. I did not mention him because the subject is so vast that one must draw a line somewhere.



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