

*Statement of the President of E.N.C.I. regarding the broadcast on the RAI (Italian state television) of the program "Report" on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January*

## **In support of Italian dog breeding**

In these first days of the year we must unfortunately note a crude attempt of attack by some media outlets on dog breeding and ENCI. This clumsy attempt is aimed against the commendable work of breeders, the zootechnical audits of ENCI, the work of expert judges, the correct maintenance of the genealogical book, the very culture of dog breeds that have given so much to man in the past and that still have so much to offer to contemporary society. Let us always remember that it is precisely thanks to the ENCI selection, which is carried out through the correct breeding of purebred dogs and by means of zootechnical audits, that the extraordinary aptitudes of our dogs emerge, nowadays active in important contexts such as the fight against Xylella and PSA (African swine fever), in numerous projects for the protection of wild fauna and biodiversity, in social areas of exceptional importance such as assisted therapies and support for disabilities. Activities of which these media outlets have not given the slightest account.

A misleading plan that aims to criminalize Italian breeders of purebred dogs, enthusiasts who bring their dogs to trials and exhibitions, with great economic sacrifices and infinite love for their dogs. It has as its objective the disintegration of the Italian Genealogical Book and its registers, kept by ENCI since 1882 and that, with all due respect to the enemies of dog breeding, ENCI will continue to keep for many years to come. An attack that also involves politics and that ENCI, wherever the push for the disintegration of the dog breeding system comes from, counteracts and will counteract, as it has always done in the past.

They try to discredit the ENCI activities related to controls, even if these have been subjected to the scrutiny of the supervisory Ministry several times, which has always confirmed our correct actions. As for anti-doping tests, it is worth underlining that ENCI, the only dog breeding organization in the world, has scrupulously followed the rules contained in the reference specification for over ten years. There have never been any incidents involving, for example, anabolics or EPO (*erythropoietin*), but in the last three years, only four cases have been found in which the dogs had taken anti-inflammatories. The above-mentioned cases were also considered doping, therefore the qualifications obtained by the dogs were revoked and those responsible were reported to the Disciplinary Commissions. In 2024 monitoring included checks in numerous events that involved the various sectors of dog breeding. As for the dog reported in the broadcast, the ENCI preliminarily asked for more detailed information on its identity and the event to which it had been taken. Basic information for any necessary investigation.

As for the structure used for racing, an FCI discipline for greyhound breeds built in Maserada (*in the province of Treviso*), we recall that ENCI Servizi won the appeal to the TAR (*tribunale amministrativo regionale = regional administrative court*) promoted by some associations, which therefore decided to appeal to the Council of State (*the jurisdictional and consultative body of the Italian public administration*). The track was built with high-quality materials and no injuries occurred to the dogs despite the numerous passages carried out.

As regards the hybridization of Czechoslovakian Wolfdog subjects with wild wolves, it is sufficient to underline that ENCI has twice received, through official press releases, compliments from the Carabinieri for the technical collaboration provided during the investigations, demonstrating a

synergy with the investigating bodies that has led to brilliant results. We reiterate that ENCI has fully financed a project carried out in collaboration with ISPRA (*Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale = Higher Institute for Environmental Protection and Research*) that allows for the verification of possible hybridizations through genomic analysis. The only Kennel Club in the world to have carried out such an activity.

It should also be remembered that ENCI is not responsible for carrying out inspections at dog breeding facilities, an activity that is the responsibility of other bodies. On the long-standing case of Nolo Del Zagnis (*an English Setter also reported by the TV program*), the media, despite ENCI having repeatedly reiterated it, have not reported the fundamental information that two different parental checks were carried out on the subject in question, at two different accredited laboratories, and both confirmed the paternity and maternity declared by the breeder.

ENCI rigorously applies the rules of the Book Regulations (Ministerial Decree 21095 of 5.2.1996) and related Technical Standards (Ministerial Decree 116130 of 22.2.2023). The latter have undergone changes and updates over the years in the primary interest of the health of dogs registered in the book. The ENCI bodies function efficiently and consistently, carrying out meticulous work aimed at continuously improving the system. The IT system in which the organization has consistently invested guarantees the automatic application of the rules for each practice relating to the Book. Our system, certified UNI EN ISO 9001:2015, guarantees absolute transparency through the online Genealogical Book, also to encourage, if necessary, reports that, if placed in the appropriate manner, are always accepted and analyzed by the offices in charge.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I can confidently guarantee that the organization will continue to carry out its work with the usual serenity and transparency. The Board of Directors will continue to take, in full autonomy, any decision it deems appropriate for the modernization of the organization, for the correct communication of canine culture and to promote correct selection based on the absolute value represented by the well-being of our dogs. The Board of Directors will continue to listen to its peripheral delegations, the breed clubs and all the breeders who, in the face of significant sacrifices, contribute to making ENCI a small jewel of Italian livestock farming and who today are expressing their solidarity in a thousand ways, even in the face of evidence of interviews granted and daringly cut. The Board of Directors will continue to defend dog breeding in every venue deemed appropriate, will protect the work of the employees of the organization, starting with its General Director, will deal as usual with the supervisory Ministry, will submit as always to the judgment of the Members' Assembly, the only body that can legitimately approve or not the work done so far.

ENCI is not intimidated and will continue, thanks to the general consensus, trust and appreciation of its Members to work for a dog breeding that can give us ever greater satisfaction.

The President  
Dino Muto