

## The 1976 Friuli earthquake in the newsroom

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(Received 19 May 2017; accepted 23 November 2017)

**ABSTRACT** The role of newspapers during the Friuli earthquakes is described and commented on with particular attention to the cooperation established with the regional scientific institutions. Thanks to this virtuous approach, people living in the epicentral area were properly informed about the evolution of the earthquake and the actions undertaken to reconstruct the devastated settlements.

**Key words:** 1976 Friuli earthquake, newspaper, science communication.

### 1. Introduction

In many respects, not just human and emotional, talking about an earthquake in the newsroom would prompt me to speak exclusively of my experience at the *Messaggero Veneto* (the newspaper of Udine), during the 1976 Friuli earthquakes. Since connections with the present cannot be overlooked, I will begin by pointing out that if for science 40 years have meant new discoveries and improvement of many techniques of inquiry and knowledge, for information they have proved to be a real revolution: the editions of the 1970s and those of today are effectively only distant relatives, and yet, from the professional and deontological point of view, they are, or at least should be, the same. So I will speak of what happened at the time, highlighting too what has changed.

### 2. The two theorems

Experience teaches that by carefully studying the general attitude of the mass media with regard to earthquakes, it is possible to formulate some quasi-scientific laws that are repeated unvaryingly at every disastrous seismic event that not only had a scientific but, above all, an emotional impact. As the mass media, always mindful of audience and circulation, and therefore advertising, seem to feed ever more on emotions, even more so than on news, we can try to outline two “theorems” and their corollaries, which were confirmed by examining the experiences during the Friuli earthquake (1976), as well as during those in Belice (1968), Irpinia (1980), Umbria-Marche (1997) and Emilia (2012).

The first “theorem” goes more or less like this: “As much as a body of information tries to impress public opinion by exaggerating the initial numbers of the dead, wounded, and missing in a contest of numbers that might match a sales run, the most pessimistic starting positions must be invariably multiplied by a figure ranging from 50 to 100 to get closer to the reality of the

situation". Something has changed now, both because there is a tendency to sensationalise the news even without verified sources, and also because a certain degree of modesty and respect has been lost. In the 7 May 1976 edition, *Messaggero Veneto* spoke of a few dozen victims, while *Il Piccolo* (the newspaper of Trieste), limited this to four. Both editorials knew that the number would be much graver, but they also knew that it was never the number of deaths that was the most important thing but rather the essence of what was happening, as well as the information about why it happened and what could happen in the following days. The "corollary" on material damage is practically the same, but the multiplication factor doubles: the first concerns a total damage assessment, while the second, at least three times larger than the former, refers to the figure that the community will really have to shell out before ending the reconstruction.

The second "theorem" states: "Given the initial amount of interest proportional to the number of victims and the amount of damage, over time the attention decreases exponentially with the distance from the epicentre, so that after a certain time only the local information media continue to speak of the earthquake." The "corollary" specifies that the subject becomes topical again only on occasion of anniversaries, or as a historical reminder, as soon as a new destructive earthquake occurs in some other part of the country, or again, as a comparison in other investigations on the efficiency of the reconstruction after other natural disasters.

The Friuli earthquake of 1976 was to confirm the above statements.

### 3. The first information

When the Earth shook, at 9 p.m. (local time) on 6 May, the shaking was distinctly felt throughout north-eastern Italy and farther in Europe (Tertulliani *et al.*, 2018), but it took more than half an hour before television broadcast the first news to the rest of Italy, entirely piecemeal: it talked of a "strong earthquake" and "likely serious damage". There was no indication of any casualties yet, and the hasty reading of the first press takes caused even more confusion because instead of reading Gemona (Fig. 1), as was written in the report referring to a town known in the most affected area, the speaker of the special news edition said Genoa (a city in north-western Italy, about 500 km from the epicentral area). The error was rectified quite quickly, but in those few minutes many people had already left their homes.

Obviously, this did not happen in Udine and in the rest of Friuli, even in those areas not directly hit, where the shock was felt very strongly. Neither did it happen in the editorial offices of the various newspapers, not just the local ones, where the teleprinters continued to spew out news, ticking incessantly at a pace that would not abate for days and even the usual midnight break, corresponding to the routine shift of personnel at the teleprinters, did not occur.

It is possible that words like teleprinter have a fairly vague meaning nowadays for many people, but forty years have passed since that evening and the diffusion of information has changed radically. In 1976, computers were not used, there was no Internet and no cell phones, and after the first strong shock, telephone lines broke down, partly because of material damage to the telephone network and partly because of overloading that crashed the majority of the telephone exchanges in the epicentral area and surroundings (Slejko, 2018).

Only the organization of the radio amateurs, of whom little was said before, managed to provide an efficient communication network in a very short time. Voluntarily and autonomously,



Fig. 1 - The places of the 1976 earthquake.

they proved irreplaceable in giving a first, albeit uncertain, dimension of the disaster, helping the emergency services intervene where most urgent. Some of them, albeit with many difficulties, moved around the affected areas, others set up base at some of the key points in Udine such as the prefecture, hospital, information centres, police station and fire-station, to create a system of radio bridges that proved crucial in the very first hours of emergency and highly useful during the following days.

In these early hours, though massively present in Friuli, the army was to prove much less useful. This was largely because the army was also heavily affected by the shock (suffice it to mention the destruction of the Goi barracks in Gemona and the 28 soldiers of the Alpine corps buried under the rubble), but also because they used their available equipment to actively communicate with each other. In addition, accustomed to military secrecy, they provided little information to civil authorities in the very first few hours. They quickly changed their approach and became a fundamental part of the rescue machine, but without the activity of the ham radio enthusiasts the initial situation would have been much more difficult.

If the circulation of news was important for those who had to intervene for relief, it was equally important for ordinary people, who needed to know what had happened, what to do and where to turn in case of necessity, but also to know the general situation of their town, that of neighbouring villages where relatives and friends resided, and that of factories and offices where they worked. People were also anxious to learn what would be done to remedy a disaster that from the dawn of 7 May began to take on the makings of an immense catastrophe. In this respect, all the information media were very useful and fundamental.

#### 4. Journalists in action

Immediately after the first shock, local newspapers, seeing the impossibility of contacting the correspondents from the various villages, sent all the available reporters (also recalling to service those who were on break, on holiday or had already finished their shift) around Friuli to get a picture, at least roughly, of what had happened. At the same time, national newspapers, press agencies, radio and television began sending their journalists. The impact on public opinion was notable: full-page headlines proclaimed the disaster, large photographs in livid black and white, brightened only partially by photographers' flashes, immediately gave an idea of how the earthquake had managed to destroy the buildings (Fig. 2). A couple of articles dictated off-the-cuff by the few lucky journalists who had found a working phone and the many articles hastily written after they had returned to the editorial office, made it clear that behind the walls of rubble seen in those early hours there would have been a great deal more serious trouble. Little was said of the victims, with numbers ranging from about ten to fifty, but as the first theorem teaches, unfortunately these were far from the grim reality.

People were desperate for news; the first issue of the regional newspapers, such as the *Messaggero Veneto*, *Il Piccolo*, and *Il Gazzettino*, were immediately sold out. At the newsstand, only a few copies of *Messaggero Veneto* were available because there was a rush on its printing works not only by Udine citizens, who had already invaded the editorial office, peering over journalists' shoulders to glimpse articles that were taking shape in the typewriters. The director of *Messaggero Veneto*, Vittorino Meloni, decided to distribute the newspaper freely to all the people there and to immediately print a new edition to reach all the newsstands that were not destroyed, even in the most affected villages, again free of charge.

The free distribution was likely not only motivated by a sense of solidarity, that seems to emerge almost exclusively in times of greatest difficulty, but also by a journalistic instinct that made Meloni understand that this was the time to reaffirm that the *Messaggero Veneto* was an instrument of public utility for the people of Friuli. It was a function he wished the paper to keep at least for a couple of years, obligating all the collaborators to give a clear picture of what was happening in the most affected territories. In the end, this proved to be a winning decision that has created that sort of affection between readers and a newspaper which is the only true secret to creating a strong bond that may increase sales and diffusion.

Confirming this relationship of mutual trust, it should be remembered that most newsstands did not exist anymore or remained closed, at least in the early days or weeks. For this reason, copies of the *Messaggero Veneto* were left next to them, possibly protected, and people were able to take them and leave the cover price, if they so wished. Indeed, there were only very few cases where the collected money did not exactly match what would have been received by the newsagents.

Right away, reporters began to explore the most affected villages and settlements, becoming not just transmission channels of others' stories, but the direct witnesses of events, genuine primary sources of news that otherwise no one else would have been able to give. And among the journalists of various newspapers and magazines, who for the most part sought and received hospitality at the *Messaggero Veneto* offices, there was also an uncommon spirit of collaboration based on the conviction that it was more important to provide news to the people than acquire more than their competitors. If the first impact of the journalists with



Fig. 2 - First page of the issue of 7 May, 1976 of the *Messaggero Veneto*.

the earthquake was to cover all the affected municipalities to carry out a kind of census of victims and damages, the second operation consisted of witnessing what was being done at a national and regional level to coordinate relief and remove rubble and to begin talking about reconstruction (Fig. 3).

## 5. Information and basic science

Shortly thereafter, the activity of newspapers began to diversify, both in seeking out human stories, not only dramatic, to be told to the readers, as well as with the commitment to explain, as much as possible and with the help of experts, what an earthquake is, why it is triggered and what can be done to defend against it. In short, it began a scientific dissemination work that had a unique quality in the newspapers and non-specialized journals and that has not been repeated. This aspect of the information deserves another reflection: in the relationship between press and science, always difficult and imbued on one side by ignorance and distrust on the other, a kind of tacit armistice was stipulated and a considerable amount of news, scientifically relevant and socially useful also to eliminate irrational outbursts of panic, was given. It was really important information, going far beyond the brief interview given by an expert at the time of the disaster (Fig. 4).

Also in this sense the Friuli earthquake was a unique example. The tendency to minimize criminal and chronicle news items, a typical legacy of the Fascist regime, also had an impact on the destructive seismic events of Italy in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The average level of general culture of the population was also not such as to demand, or even to tolerate, efforts made for scientific dissemination. During the Belice earthquake, the press commitment was almost entirely absorbed by the impact of the earthquake on an already fragile social fabric and by attention towards possible intrusions of organized crime in the immediate and long-term intervention work. The Irpinia earthquake then came too quickly after that of Friuli to prompt the journalists to open up the same scientific topics once again. Lastly, for the Umbria quake, the desire for scientific disclosure reappeared, also because it was linked to the difficult problem of recovering celebrated artistic masterpieces. However, it inevitably clashed with the new tendency of most of the Italian press that already tried to raise profits, no longer with efforts to increase the readership, but, above all, by making savings, for example on the journalistic staff (the typographic staff had already been virtually eliminated) and reducing the far from negligible cost of the paper and, therefore, space for specialist topics and culture.

## 6. Information and politics

After the first emergency, in the national newspapers, the reports of the Friuli earthquake began to occupy less and less space on the front-page and then in the inside pages as well, almost disappearing in a rather short time. In the following months, the articles merely took into account the work done by the Special Commissioner Giuseppe Zamberletti, who had been appointed to speed up the bureaucratic machine that immediately emerged as one of the greatest



Fig. 3 - Front-page of the issue of 18 May 1976 of the *Messaggero Veneto*. Scientists discussed, during a meeting held in Trieste, the antiseismic actions to apply in the epicentral area.

**SPECIALE**

GLI ESPERTI ESCLUDONO (PUR CON LE DIVVE CASTELLE) IL RIPETERSI DI UNA CATASTROFE - PERICOLOSE LE STRUTTURE LESIONATE

# Lo stillicidio angoscioso di sussulti

**La terra ha tremato 49 volte**

**GRADI DELLA SCALA MERCALLI**

**ORE**

**CAUTE OPERANZE A TRIESTE UN SOPRALUOGO IN EUCLETTORO**

## Decresce l'intensità del terremoto molte frane nelle zone più impervie

La diminuzione dell'intensità del terremoto ha provocato una serie di frane in zone particolarmente impervie. Le operazioni di salvataggio sono state condotte con cautela, con l'impiego di gru e ponti aerei. I soccorsi sono stati effettuati in modo ordinato, con l'impiego di personale specializzato. Le operazioni di salvataggio sono state condotte in modo ordinato, con l'impiego di personale specializzato.

**DISORDINI IL DOTTOR CONSOLLA, A SUPPLUGO CON UNA STAZIONE MOBILE**

## Alla fine del fenomeno tellurico si conteranno oltre mille scosse?

Il dottor Console, a Suppluga con una stazione mobile, ha osservato che il fenomeno tellurico si conterà oltre mille scosse. Le operazioni di salvataggio sono state condotte con cautela, con l'impiego di gru e ponti aerei. I soccorsi sono stati effettuati in modo ordinato, con l'impiego di personale specializzato.




Fig. 4 - Issue of 11 May 1976 of the *Messaggero Veneto*. The opinions of two scientists, Francesco Giorgetti and Rodolfo Console, about the seismic sequence is reported together with the graph of the daily seismicity in Friuli.



enemies on the long road to normality. Another point attracting the attention of many journalists was the armistice between all the regional political forces that were able to temporarily set aside their customary antagonism and to legislate in the fastest and most effective possible way.

However, except in the local newspapers, the attention had almost completely gone when the September aftershocks turned the spotlight on Friuli again (Fig. 5), also thanks to the fact that they occurred just while there was a large parliamentary delegation in Udine, which needless to say was quick to leave. Once back in Rome, still shaken by fear, the delegation convinced Parliament to immediately decide on allocating additional funds and conferring greater power of intervention to the Special Commissioner and to the local authority, represented by the Regional President Antonio Comelli.

Friuli was back on the front page of the newspapers. It was again inundated with Italian and foreign journalists, who continued to provide news for months because, in addition to insisting on already covered issues, they faced a whole series of entirely new factors. Among them, the most striking was the winter exodus from the struck villages to the seaside resorts; an exodus decided by the authorities and undertaken almost without opposition by the population that, however, returned daily to their hometown to work, to carry out their various personal interests and to begin repairing their houses (Zamberletti, 2018). It was during this period that the “Friuli model” began to appear. The Italian government tried to apply the same model after the Irpinia earthquake, even employing many of the same people, with less success and rejected after the Umbria quake not many years before.

Faced with the exodus, the press immediately had a difficult dilemma: assigning its staff mainly where the population had temporarily moved, creating new ephemeral towns of some tens of thousands inhabitants, or keeping them almost entirely in the affected territory. In this regard, the choice made by the *Messaggero Veneto* was emblematic, where at the time of the earthquake, the editorial staff was very young and enthusiastic, led by some more experienced journalists. Many of the young journalists proposed creating some editorial boards on the coast, while director Vittorino Meloni decided to keep the staff in the earthquake zone. His argument was that those who would have spent the winter on the coast would have no interest in news of the place where, in practice, they were just sleeping, while they would be hungry for news related to their hometowns, to the resumption of work at the factories and in the offices, to the installation of prefabricated buildings adapted to a climate that was far from tropical, and to the first signs of reconstructing public and private buildings. Vittorino Meloni was to prove right. Besides contributing to the sales success of the newspaper, the fact of continuing to inform on the whole earthquake zone helped keep a village like Bordano alive, not only for Bordano citizens in exile, because they did not need external stimuli to remember their hometown, but also for all other people of Friuli. And this also happened for all other affected villages.

While the validity of the second theorem was once again confirmed, the main topics of the information media, which continued to follow the situation on a daily basis, were the winning choice of favouring factory reconstruction over housing, the installation of new prefabricated buildings, and the progress of possible repair actions and reconstruction.

Anno 1201 - Numero 210 - L. 100  
 Direzione: Venezia, S. Marco 1201  
 Redazione: Venezia, S. Marco 1201  
 Abbonamenti: Venezia, S. Marco 1201  
 Pubblicità: Venezia, S. Marco 1201
 


# Messaggero Veneto


 Venerdì 16 settembre 1976  
 10 lire

**UN ALTRO PIÙ GRAVE TERREMOTO: due picchi di 8,5 e 9 Mercalli in sei ore fra 43 scosse**

## Giornata infernale per il Friuli

**Ancora morti: 7 accertati, un centinaio i feriti - Ventimila persone accrescono il numero già tanto grande dei senzatetto**

**È cominciato il dramma dell'esodo: migliaia di profughi a Lignano e a Grado**



Il Friuli, il Gradis e gli altri più gravi terremoti, ha provocato una giornata infernale. Dopo la scossa principale della 11.05.76 (M=8,5) un suo dopo, alle 11.21, di un'ordine una scossa più forte (M=8,5) mentre le scosse in generale (meno di 100) si sono succedute rapidamente nell'arco di 20 ore, una dopo l'altra, con una forza di intensità di 8,5. Il terremoto è stato seguito da una serie di scosse di minore intensità, ma che hanno provocato un numero di profughi che si è avvicinato a quello registrato in Giappone, Francia e altre località più vicine. Nella foto in alto, gli abitanti della zona di Lignano e di Grado, che si sono rifugiati nelle chiese, in attesa della notte.

### Il massimo da tutti

QUANTO È STATO terribile, come è difficile da descrivere, il terremoto che ha colpito il Friuli e il Gradis il 15 settembre 1976. In questa giornata infernale, due scosse di magnitudo superiore a 8,5 hanno provocato un numero di profughi che si è avvicinato a quello registrato in Giappone, Francia e altre località più vicine. Nella foto in alto, gli abitanti della zona di Lignano e di Grado, che si sono rifugiati nelle chiese, in attesa della notte.



Fig. 5 - Front-page of the issue of 16 September 1976 of the *Messaggero Veneto*. The effects of the strong aftershocks of 15 September are described and the graph of the daily seismicity in Friuli is reported.

## 7. Newspapers for scientific dissemination

Every day, there were reports on extraordinary and ordinary laws that were promulgated by the Special Commissioner and the Region. At the same time, scientific dissemination continued, passing gradually from geology and seismology to anti-seismic engineering, to the most advanced and sophisticated sciences and technologies used to investigate and intervene on the building heritage. To understand how this way of doing journalism had a positive impact on the Friuli population, suffice it to point out that before the earthquake of 6 May 1976, the *Messaggero Veneto*, the newspaper that was most devoted to dialogue, also scientific, with its readers, sold about 14,000 copies per day, while in mid-1977 sales were more than doubled. They continued to rise slowly but continuously up to nearly 60,000 copies during the 1980s.

Analysing then how the press, radio and television in 1976 tackled the problem of the scientific dissemination of past and present earthquakes, it is worth noting how on this occasion the roles between local and national information media were reversed. While it is usually the latter to devote pages and space to topics that are generally considered in-depth studies, and hence unnecessary, on that occasion they were the first to give prominence to the words of scientists, technicians and specialists (Fig. 4). Living and working in the epicentral area or at its margins, it was realized that the importance of providing information about earthquakes had to be put on a similar level to that about the efficiency of aid and reconstruction interventions. Indeed, only by being informed, can moments of unjustified panic be avoided and it may be hoped that people will play an active role in demanding that repairs and reconstructions are in accordance with the most evident rules and needs.

Initially, the purpose of scientific dissemination was to provide the real picture of the situation, illustrating the origins, causes and effects of a phenomenon that because of its very strong emotional impact continued to motivate reactions, behaviour and talk based on superstitions and legends even at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These could cause fear and panic, feelings that are effectively out of place in times of extreme delicacy, such as those of the first weeks of relief, when everything must work perfectly so as not to waste the effectiveness of military and volunteer efforts.

At a later time, however, the scientific information became important to make it clear to everyone where and how to reconstruct, if it was the case to repair, what kind of arrangements needed taking to be reasonably safe in continuing to live in a place subject to seismic risk that, therefore, sooner or later will shake again. This was perhaps the most important and hardest point to make everyone understand. In fact, almost always the human mind tends to hide in some hidden recess, if not to erase altogether, the most unpleasant memories and this is probably the reason why the earthquake of 6 May 1976 left almost all people in Friuli stunned, who apparently believed that their land was relatively aseismic.

And yet not a month went by without the newspapers reporting at least one earthquake in Carnia, in the Friuli plain, the Cividale area or the piedmont sector. Without mentioning the destructive earthquakes of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, there were few who would not be able to remember the fierce earthquake that struck Verzegnis on 26 March 1928, which fortunately did not cause many deaths because it occurred when most people were working in the fields (Slejko *et al.*, 1989). There were certainly many too who would remember another destructive earthquake on 18 October 1936 on the Cansiglio plateau, extending its disastrous effects over most of the north-

western Pordenone area (Giacchetti *et al.*, 1989). The historic reconstruction of the earthquakes in the world, in Italy, and in Friuli, was therefore the first step to bring people closer to the mysterious event that had affected them and that they would remember forever.

The second essential step was to clear the air of legends, superstitions and false news that could create irrational and dangerous reactions. An example is given by the widespread belief among the Friuli people that Mt. Amariana (the mountain near Amaro that appears like an elegant pyramid from the northern valley of the River Tagliamento) was an extinguished volcano. This belief probably originated owing to the white plumes of dust created by the landslides on the slopes during the strongest shocks, but often also because of normal soil degradation. This was a widespread legend, even reiterated in some elementary schools in the area, a story that created further apprehension that was definitely damaging at a time when other fears were well justified. Although they are relatively simple issues, it was no small effort to make them understandable to anyone lacking any knowledge of geology, and especially for the elderly, for whom school had been replaced too soon by work in the fields, in the woods, or by emigration. To make this effort a success, the collaboration between science and journalists was a key factor, an open and continuous collaboration with few precedents and which has not seen comparable repeats, in either intensity or duration.

The first obvious reference points were the Faculty of Geology of Trieste and the Experimental Geophysical Observatory (as it was called then, while today it is the National Institute of Oceanography and Experimental Geophysics, but still keeping the acronym OGS), which reported not only the daily number, magnitude and time of shocks, but began releasing information on seismicity and seismology. Together with the *Messaggero Veneto*, it compiled an eight-page insert of colour illustrations on seismicity (isoseismals, seismograms, historical and current epicentres, hypocentres, tectonics) and seismic risk (map of the destroyed, severely damaged, and damaged municipalities; map of the maximum expected intensity). It was a modest publishing exercise that some, in those moments, considered a gamble, and which instead proved a major success because “*Il Friuli che c’è sotto*” (“The underground Friuli” was the title of the dossier) reached tens of thousands of people with an entirely unfamiliar subject and has been preserved by many who still remember it today (Fig. 6). Another small, but significant initiative, arising from the collaboration between the *Messaggero Veneto* and OGS, was to publish daily what was commonly called the “earthquake graph”: this was a small diagram showing the seismic activity as vertical bars; more precisely, the time of the day was reported on the x-axis and the earthquake magnitude on the y-axis (Figs. 4 and 5). In those months, this rudimentary representation became one of the first things readers used to check in the newspaper, to see if the phenomenon was decreasing or not.

From the very first moments, it was necessary to let everyone know that it was possible to cohabit with the earthquake, that Friuli should not be considered a land to abandon. The most fitting journalistic exercise to do this was, of course, to illustrate how people lived in highly seismic areas and how to protect against the earthquake threat. To achieve this goal, reporters at *Messaggero Veneto* began writing about prediction, prevention, risk, hazard and seismic engineering.

In the early days, the newspaper was inundated with the phone calls by people who wanted to know if they could safely return to their homes, or to what remained of them. One of the first issues to explore in greater detail was therefore to explain that it was impossible to correctly forecast earthquakes, and then to go on to consider a geological, geomorphological, and engineering type

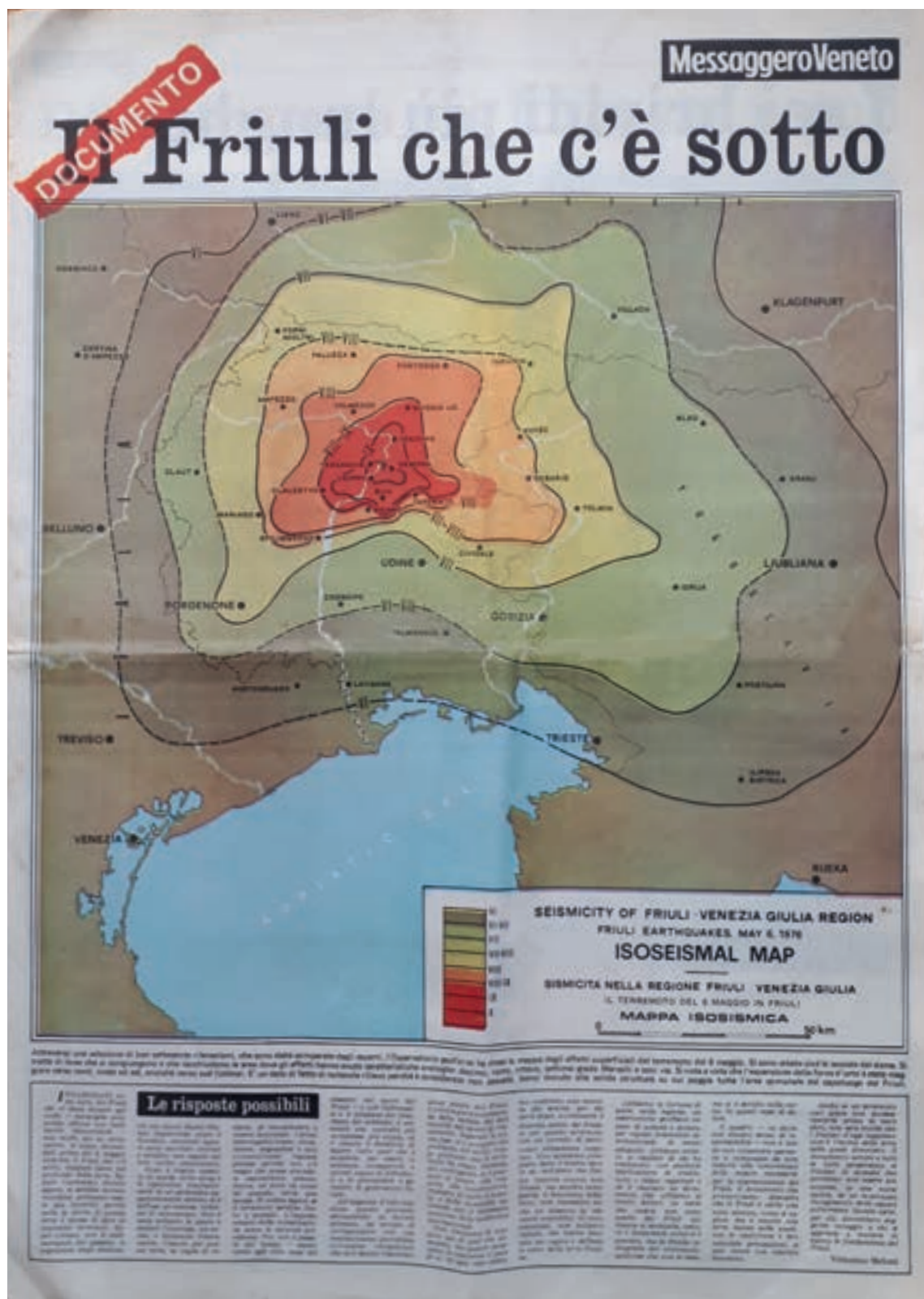


Fig. 6 - Front page of the dossier "Il Friuli che c'è sotto".

of prevention, which was not only possible but surely necessary. Consequently, there were articles on soil types, on the dangers of slopes particularly exposed to landslides, on the expedients needed to reinforce the new buildings and those that could be repaired.

In short, almost every day and for months, the Friuli people read of geological, seismic and engineering topics. The great surprise was that those articles were among the most read and most requested, and that even today the publishing of scientific work is remembered and praised by many people. All this goes against those who say that the press, radio and television only feed the audience with empty or even absurd news items, because it is the public itself wanting and asking for them. On the contrary, the reality is that the population is hungry for interesting and serious information.

## 8. Conclusions

On coming to the conclusions, one inevitable finding and at least one question arise.

The finding is that in our profession as journalists, even in the presence of a catastrophe, keeping a clear head is fundamental.

The question, instead, concerns the effectiveness of the work of journalists to motivate, to provoke public administrators. It is odd that the immense patrimony of knowledge on seismology and seismic engineering has not been applied elsewhere to prevent similar disasters, limiting their consequences in terms of victims and damage. It is not that a plan was made and then limited or delayed because funds were scarce or were not available: the plan has simply never been implemented. If today an event such as that of 1976 were to happen again, it would in fact be safer to live in the 1976 epicentral area, where the reconstruction was realized properly, than in the rest of Friuli (Santulin *et al.*, 2018). Today, as in the past centuries, only after having paid with deaths and destruction can people significantly improve their safety.

Journalists might be justified by saying that their task is to produce news and that politics and administration is the duty of others, but in such a way the work of journalist would hardly improve the present situation: as a duty and obligation, journalists should really do much more.

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