

We need a change

by Alessandro Lombardo

We need a change. We know that a serious effort to safeguard business archives requires immediate action. We know that without prompt, decisive and shared reforms by the Department of Cultural Assets, the extraordinary archival and cultural experience that grew out of the 1980s and 1990s will be lost in a few years.

It is worth reading the gifted archivist, Marco Bologna's passionate review of the proceedings of the conference "Riforme in corsa...archivi pubblici e archivi d'impresa tra trasformazioni, privatizzazioni e fusioni" published in this issue of the magazine. The reader will be stunned by the depth and breadth of the crisis pervading the field of records management.

In particular, for Italian business archives, the situation is so serious that it will be necessary to seek help from the assistance programs of "Archival Solidarity", a project of ICA/SPA which, beginning with this issue, we would like to speak about at greater length.

With the implosion of business archives followed by the abandon of related processes and structures, not only would we be throwing away a wealth of integrated experience and large documentary patrimonies, we would also be destroying important points of reference for our identity. As suggested in the article by Giuseppe Paletta, we are committing this error with the full awareness that the strengthening of the entrepreneurial and managerial spirit of our country depends on the promotion of a modern business culture that is strongly linked to its origins.

Having said that, we can anticipate that the Department of Cultural Assets supported an idea for a project started between Genoa, Milan and Rome that, once developed, could lead to a much desired turning point. And we shall discuss this idea in greater detail in the next issue of Culture e Impresa. For now, in the present issue, we shall continue to provide information and points of reflection with articles by Fabio Del Giudice, Renata Meazza, Massimo Negri and Salvatore Vento. In addition to the national overviews of Denmark, Finland and Norway, we wish to call the readers' attention to the comprehensive essay by Amedeo Lepore of Bari University entitled "La storia d'impresa e le nuove frontiere digitali: archivi e risorse telematiche" and the startup of a first research study on industrial cinema archives edited by Letizia Cortini (ANAI – Italian National Archival Association). Of particularly relevance is the concluding interview with Tommaso Fanfani on the Piaggio Foundation -- an unusually rich *inside history* of one of the most successful Italian initiatives in the field of business culture.