DICHIARAZIONI ALLA STAMPA

4 APRILE 1955 ORE 09.30

THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF A FRIENDLY COUNTRY WHILE VISITING THE UNITED STATES, COULD HARDLY FOREGO COMING IN PERSON TO SALUTE CALIFORNIA, A STATE SO DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF THE EASTERN SEA-BOARD AND FROM THOSE OF THE MIDDLE-WEST, AND WHICH PLAYS SUCH AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL LIFE OF THIS GREAT REPUBLIC.

Add, THAT FOR AN ITALIAN, CALIFORNIA HAS A VERY SPECIAL ATTRACTION. ITS ORANGE GROVES AND VINEYARDS RECALL EVEN MY NATIVE SICILY, AND THE LOWER TIRRENIAN COAST.

THIS EXPLAINS WHY SUCH A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF ITALIANS HAVE FOUND A LIFE HERE AS PLEASANT AS THE ONE LEFT BEHIND IN ITALY, AND A SECOND FATHER+LAND.

AS YOU MAY HAVE READ IN OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE, THE PRIME MINISTER AND MYSELF HAVE HAD IN WASHINGTON A SERIES OF TALKS OF WHICH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT WAS THE ONE WITH PRESIDENT EISENHOWER.(X) IN OUR TALKS WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE THE MORE OUTSTANDING ASPECTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION WERE REVIEWD. ONCE AGAIN, ITALY HAS FOUND

(X) whose great personality has very much impressed us.

THE UNITED STATES FULL OF UNDERSTANDING FOR HER PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES. IN OUR TURN WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GIVE TO THE UNITED STATES THE ASSURANCE OF THE FULL SOLIDARITY OF THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT IN THE MANY PROBLEMS AND RESPONSABILITIES WHICH THIS GREAT COUNTRY HAS TO SHOULDER.

ONE ASPECT OF OUR TALKS WHICH WE WOULD LIKE TO UNDERLINE WAS THE SPIRIT OF COLLABORATION WHICH ANIMATES US BOTH AS CO-SIGNERS OF THE ATLANTIC PACT, WHOSE ANNIVERSARY FALLS TODAY. THIS SPIRIT GUARANTEES THAT ALL OF US - IN THE MEASURE OF OUR CAPACITIES - CAN POOL ~~NIS~~ OUR EFFORTS SO THAT THEY WILL PROVE TO EVERYONE'S ADVANTAGE. THIS IS TRUE OF OUR RELATIONS WITH THE EASTERN COUNTRIES AND THE COUNTRIES OF THE PACIFIC, IN WHICH YOU, CALIFORNIANS, ARE NATURALLY, PARTICULARLY INTERESTED. IT IS ALSO TRUE WITH REGARD TO THE INDIPENDENCE AND UNIFICATION OF GERMANY, AND TO EUROPEAN INTEGRATION, TO ECONOMIC COLLABORATION, AND TO THE EXPLOITATION OF ATOMIC ENERGY....

TO SUM UP WE FOUND OURSELVES OF ONE MIND IN ALL MAJOR EFFORTS DIRECTED TOWARD HUMANITARIANISM AND PEACE.

DISCORSO ALLA COLLETTIVITA' ITALIANA AL SHERATON-PALACE HOTEL, LUNEDI' 4 APRILE 1955.

I am glad to be here among so many several distinguished guests who have come from ~~many~~ distant points to meet me. But on this matter of travel my record is not too bad either.....

I have spent in your Country very few days, and busy days they have been! Together with Prime Minister Scelba, in Washington, I had the welcome opportunity to meet the President of the United States and prominent personalities of your Government and public life. Then we went to New York where we spent three days so intense that in retrospect they seem more like a whole week. And here I am. I felt I could not miss the opportunity to come to the West, the beckoning Golden West

of story-books which has become the great and busy West of our day. I wanted a chance to express to you, as we did to the people we met in Washington and New York, my gratitude for the very precious help you gave us in very hard times, and still give. I wanted also to express our pride for the part played by the Americans of Italian descent in the development of this great Country of yours which never fails to impress the traveller who arrives in your midst. Last not least I wanted to tell you why we feel confident in the future of our Country, Italy. The struggle for peace and liberty ~~and~~ in the world is not yet at an end but if we stick toge= ther, if our determination stiffens and stays stiff, the battle will be won. There are good

omens of this.

The exchanges of views we had in Washington were very satisfactory. They centered not only on our partnership in the North Atlantic Pact and the relationship between our two Countries, but also on broader themes. Indeed, there is not a single question in the world today which is not linked to all others....

Take peace. How can peace be preserved in Europe unless it is maintained in the Far East too?

Of course, our thoughts, as Italians, are mostly centered round the problems of Western Europe. That is where we are located, and that is where we belong. Luckily, in this respect, we now feel more confident. A real step towards a tighter union of the countries

of Europe is on its way, now that the London and Paris Agreements have passed the French Parliament.

But we also keep in mind the problems and anxieties of the rest of the free world.

We fully understand the interest with which the United States, and particularly this State facing the Pacific, follows the situation in the Far East. We have stated that we are willing to support a common line of action to be drawn up together with our Allies, in order to enable peace in the Pacific to be safeguarded. In other words, we believe that the spirit of the Atlantic Pact should operate in the Pacific as well.

That leads to a further thought: Pacts, in our crucial age of change and decision, should

all be envisaged as leading toward closer integration between Nations. Even if they started as mere military Pacts. For let us never forget: no man, no Nation, is ~~an~~ a true island ~~alone unto himself~~ in this world. Just as the growth and prœperity of California is a heartening fact to us, so must the internal problems of Italy be a concern of yours.

Let me tell you something about them. First an enormous work of reconstruction has been achieved and the conditions for a fresh start laid down.

If we consider that at war's end one third of our national wealth had been destro= yed, and if we keep in mind the moral damages of war, we have good reasons to feel

confident about our present state of affairs.

We can say that we have now attained a certain stability in our democratic institutions and a real recovery of our econo= my - to a point higher than prewar days - though not high enough for the needs of 20th Century man.

A few figures will help: housing, to the extent of nine millions rooms, has been rebuilt. The increase of industrial produc= tion starting with 100 in 1938, has reached 172; agricultural output 112; one million and a half acres of land have been distributed by the Land Reform Bill.

Out of four million unemployed at hand when war ended, half have been absorbed into new jobs created since then. More over

the new annual labor contingent now finds almost enough jobs waiting to absorb it.

I said just now that our democratic institutions have been stabilized. This does not mean that they are no longer in danger. As a matter of fact we still have in Italy the largest Communist party of Europe. Approxima= tely one third of the Country votes Communist or for the Socialist party which follows communist leadership. Only a small part of them are of course ideologically Communist. The great majority enroles for expediency as a kind of insurance against lay-offs. For the core of the Italian problem remains unemployment.

As long as the Country is crippled by a couple of million unemployed, no lasting stability can really be achieved. That was

true yesterday and it is true today. We are however no longer in the days when the very survival of our Country depended day by day on help from abroad. We can now undertake plans requiring time. They, too, of course, will need some foreign aid. But an aid which will be in the nature of an investment. Ours is no longer a problem without solution. And the solution can be foreseen within a definite span of time. No longer need we talk of an incurable illness. An exhaustive study of the appropria= te medicine has been prepared by experts and has been recently submitted to the O.E.E.C. This study foresees, in a period of ten years, an increased productivity of Italy's economic machine giving rise to four million new jobs. The success of the plan is largely dependent on

investments. The needed capital cannot all be obtained within the Country itself. In this connection I mention the Bill, now under consideration in the Italian Parliament, guaranteeing to foreign capital a reasonable profit, as well as the free transferance of capital itself.

The solution of this most important problem would mean much for the cause of democracy not only in Italy but all over the world. The forces now flocking after the Pied Piper of Communism would disperse, and democracy would be consolidated in Italy. The example would spread.

The recent vote poll held in the most important Italian factory, FIAT, where, for the first time, the Communist majority among

the workers was reversed in favor of the Democratic Unions, is an eloquent sign..... Any help we could get towards this solution - namely healing Communism with jobs - would be to the interest not only of Italy, but of the Atlantic Community itself. That community can= not survive without Italy. As a community it is only as strong as its weakest member. We all can and must make Italy one of its health= iest and strongest members.

Allow me now to say a few words to the Italians of California. I say Italians, but I mean all of you who claim Italian descent.

To tell you that I am touched by the presence tonight of so many of you, is an understatement. For many years now the Mother Country, as your Speaker so aptly named Her, has kept in touch with your triumphal progress.

We have in mind - better we keep in our hearts - the unceasing generosity of countless Committees and Organizations which have supported and continue to support so many of our social and charitable institutions in Italy. It would be impossible for us to mention all of them, but I know of your generous contributions to Italian War Relief, Flood Relief, Sons of Italy Orphana= ge, Mutilatini, and all the various Boys' Towns all over Italy. You are known as the men and women who never fail to get behind any project for the improvement of the life of our people, and I wish to thank you once again for what you have done. I hesitate to mention even a name or an institution, but I hope you will forgive me if I show one weakness, for the name of a person who came from very near my own home town - that of the "Di Giorgio Orphanage and

School" at Cefalù in Sicily. This magnificent project will soon be inaugurated. It is indeed sad to think that Joe Di Giorgio will not be there that day, but what of it? When our good dreams are realized it is as if your very life were prolonged.....

But now that I have begun to mention people by name, how can I forget that I am in the Twon where Amedeo Giannini from the ashes of the great fire built the mightiest Bank of the Country?

And how can I forget Maestro Merola who founded your Opera?

Surely you will not stop here! I hear there are plans afoot to give your City a Center of Italian Culture..... perhaps I am jumping

the gun, and I will say no more. But we all have great faith, I am sure, in a man who is known for his love of the Arts. I refer to Mr. Frank De Bellis.....

To all of you go my thanks for this memorable evening, to the Order of the Sons of Italy, to the Italian Catholic Federation, to the Cenacolo and to the other organizations, to every single lady and gentleman present who has come not to honour me, but the Country which I represent.

Signori, non posso stringere la mano a tutti, amici vecchi, e amici nuovi che mi sono fatto in questa prima indimenticabile giornata di vita californiana, ma permettete che concluda quest~~a chiacchierata~~ mia favella nella lingua mia, che fu già la lingua di molti di voi, e che, spero, suonerà dolce, seppure lontana, anche ai vostri orecchi.....

Pensate che questa lingua, frammista allo spagnuolo, fu già udita in queste terre quattrocento anni fa in bocca a monaci francescani, a marinai e pionieri che risalirono questa Costa quando la bandiera stellata che oggi vi protegge era ancora da nascere.

Quanto varie ~~e mescolate~~ sono le origini di ogni vero americano!

Ed ecco, forse, il profondo segreto della grandezza dell'America!

Non lo dimenticate. Non lo dimenticate/ voi sopratutto, che avete il compito di convogliare nel grande fiume delle acque americane il torrente limpido di ciò che l'Italia ha di meglio!