

New appeal to the Free and Strong

Milan – Pergusa (Enna), 21-25 May 2003

On the 18th January 1919 the Italian Popular Party, with Fr Luigi Sturzo, issued the country with an “Appeal to the free and strong”, that Italians who felt “the duty strongly to co-operate unconditionally for the homeland” participate “united together”, “without prejudice or preconceptions”, in the democratic growth of Italy, taking on board ideals of justice and freedom. All that “while the representatives of the victorious nations” of the First World War, reunite “to prepare the basis of real and lasting peace”.

Today, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the passing of the Law 22 May 1978, no.194 on procured abortion in Italy, peace is still compromised by terrorism and by a series of local conflicts, which in various ways stain the Holy Land and many countries of the world with blood.

For this reason, we are aware that the recognition on every human having the right to life from conception to its natural conclusion is fundamental to humans living together and to the same political community. There will never be peace until that right is fully recognised, may we appeal to all people of good will, that together, without prejudice or preconceptions, support in their interest ideals of liberty, justice and peace, with respect for essential condition to reach such objectives: the reaffirmation, without ambiguity, in international conventions and in national legislation of the Right to life of every human being from conception and throughout the arc of its growth to its natural death.

Therefore we ask that representatives of member States of United Nations promote the defence of human life in every stage of its growth and in all countries, rich and poor, if truly they want peace. Only in this way, in fact, can they strengthen the basis of a just and lasting peace. We ask United Nations to take care that the rich nations do not close the doorway of development of the poor nations, limiting their aid to absurd anti-birth politics such as campaigns promoting sterilization and procured abortion.

We reject imperialist governments which create dominating peoples and lead to violence: therefore we ask that the United Nations recognise all just national aspirations, hasten universal disarmament, guarantee the freedom of the seas, advocate in international relations social legislation with full recognition of all human rights beginning with birth, equality of work, religious freedom against every oppression of sect, have the strength of sanction and a way of protecting the rights of the weak against the overpowering tendencies of the strong.

We ask the political parties of each country to contribute to strengthening those initiatives and principles which will protect, right from conception, the life of every human being and will take away any danger of terrorism and new wars, to give a stable structure to all nations with an adequate distribution of resources and a maintainable development, to effect the ideals of social justice and improve general working conditions.

We ask representatives of the member States of the European Union in particular to prepare a European Constitution which recognises fully, as fundamental and central, the Right to life from conception of every human being. We ask them to refrain from financially supporting any organisation, including governmental organisations, which might be committed to the formulation and encouragement of family planning programmes including sterilization and procured abortion, especially in poor countries,

For the best future of Italy in the European Union we dedicate all our activity with enthusiastic fervour and put forward the following proposals.

In the Constitution we want one popular State which recognises the limits of its activity, respecting and promoting the nuclei and natural organisms such as the family founded on marriage, individual personalities and private initiatives. And we ask for the reform of the parliamentary institution on the basis of proportional representation so that the State be the most sincere expression of the will of the people; we want the simplification of the legislation, we invoke legal recognition of the parties and trade-unions, an effective local government autonomy, the institution of the City and consequent reform of provincial bodies and the wider devolution of regional units.

However, these reforms will be in vain and insignificant if we do not insist on reclaiming, as the soul of society, the true sense of liberty responding to the civic maturity of our people and to the highest growth of her energy: religious freedom, freedom to teach, without state monopoly: freedom of unions without preference and privileged sides: freedom of local government.

This ideal of freedom does not intend to undermine the State, but is essentially organic in its renewal of the energy and activity which must find at its centre co-ordination, evaluation, defence and progressive growth. Energies which must act as vital nuclei, able to derive elements of conservation and progress from the common mind, giving value to authority as strength and exponent together of common supremacy and of social collaboration.

The necessary and urgent reforms in the field of foresight and social assistance, in work legislation, in the formation and care of small businesses, social communication must tend to elevation of the worker classes. And while increasing the economic strength of the country, the increase in production, the tax reform, the solution of the by-now chronic problem of “the Middle of the Day”, the scholastic reorganisation and care of the environment will make the country develop in a balanced and maintainable way.

Inspired by the principles expressed above, we hereby present in the political life and, in the name of “Solidarity – Freedom, Justice and Peace” we request of all people of good will without religious distinction, commitment to our programme: to those who know how to combine a good sense of rights and national interests to Europeans with a healthy internationalism, to those who value and respect the Right to life of every human being from the moment of conception.