

repeat, as leader of the Liberal-Democrat-Republican
current, bring about an agreement with the other currents.
The different but not less serious passions, as
Catholics (for example, don Turzo) can hope to become
the leader of Free Italy. Although Italy is a Catholic
country - indeed, precisely because Italy is a Catholic
country, and seat of the Papacy, a priest cannot be
even the head of the state - whoever fails to grasp
this fact at once knows nothing of Italy. From Dante to
Mussolini, politics in Italy - this Catholic country -
have always been essentially secular. The Papal States
themselves have never been able to stand on their feet without
countless appeals for help to foreign arms - French and
Austrian. Italian Catholics, even the most bigoted of
them, are in favour of the separation of powers
that is to say the Church to the priests and the
state to the politicians. Even the Vatican would give
with consternation an unqualified movement led by
a militant Catholic or still worse by a priest. It
would therefore be an error - an error harmful to the
evolution of the Italian political crisis - were the
United Nations to endorse any suggestion of the
prominent antifascist with qualifications as the
leader of Free Italy. It would be more prudent
to recognize the historic peculiarities of Italian
politics, and to encourage a coalition of those
currents which aspire to the creation of
democratic state -

Yours sincerely
Ignazio Silone