

The war is lost, but Italy can still save herself!

(An appeal of the Italian Socialist Party)

Principal points:

1. The appeal is not a conventional salutation, but the presentation of a movement of free Italians firmly resolved to fight for the peace and freedom of their country.
2. The rebirth, both in organization and in spirit, of the free labor movement is a proof of the failure of the totalitarian fascist state. Twenty years have not yet elapsed since the atrocious assassination of Matteotti and the prophecy of the Martyr is already being fulfilled: You may kill me, but the idea within me is immortal.
3. Fascism has succeeded merely in banishing Socialism beyond the law, but not in banishing it from history. The Socialist idea is inherent in modern society. Legality has become a straight-jacket ever since socialism and liberty have been excluded from it. The policemen and judges charged with defending it are in reality defending an empty sepulchre.
4. Life is elsewhere. Outside of fascism, outside of legality. Today the real life of Italy lies in the clandestine associations. In them truth has taken refuge. But even when driven beyond the bounds of legality, even when forced to hide in the catacombs, even when uttered falteringly by men poor, humble and unarmed it remains stronger than all the official falsehoods, though these be supported by force of arms, by gold and by sacerdotal benedictions.
5. Falsehoods may be recognized by their fruits. The present war, a partisan, barbarous and above all useless war of extermination, is the fruit of twenty years of fascist dictatorship.
6. Socialism has risen anew with irresistible force in factories, shipyards, rice-fields, mines, ports, barracks, it has arisen spontaneously from the untold sufferings of the Italian working people, from their destitution, from their outraged dignity, from the denial of their rights as human beings. It has been reborn, purified of the errors and weaknesses of the past. It is truth won by experience, by suffering, rediscovered at the cost of blood and tears. It is the expression of the new consciousness of Italian workers who feel themselves to be men and citizens once more.
7. The most important spiritual conquest of reborn Italian Socialism is the indissoluble bond between Socialism and freedom. The Italian Socialist Party is allied to socialist movements operating in Germany and in the countries occupied by Hitler; it is allied to labor movements in the democratic countries. The International lives despite the war. It will be the salvation of humanity.
8. The economic concessions made by fascism to labor neither deceive nor corrupt the Italian workers. The social question which the war has intensified to a point of crisis is not simply a question of salaries and social insurance. It is a question of the total reorganization of society. Economic improvements unsustained by political liberties and democratic institutions are illusory and deceptive.
9. The fundamental problem of our era is no longer Socialism or Capitalism; but rather, what kind of Socialism? Free and democratic Socialism, or else State and tyrannical-Socialism? True Socialism or false Socialism? The Italian Socialist Party has rejected the senseless and fallacious ambition of dictatorship and state authoritarianism.
10. "Freedom consists in transforming the state from an organ superior to society into an organ entirely subordinate to it." (Marx, Criticism of the Gotha Programme.)

The contrast between the political organization of the world and its technical and economic development is the origin of the whole present-day crisis. Fascism is the most brutal and reactionary expression of this crisis, but bourgeois democracy also has shown itself incapable of creating a new order. The Italian Socialist Party is anti-fascist and anti-imperialist at the same time. It desires a reorganization of production in which the latter will cease to be subordinated to capitalist profit and will serve the interests of consumption and of collective wellbeing. It desires a reorganization of international relationships in which no room will be left for imperialism and national sovereignties, but only for a free and fraternal collaboration of all peoples.