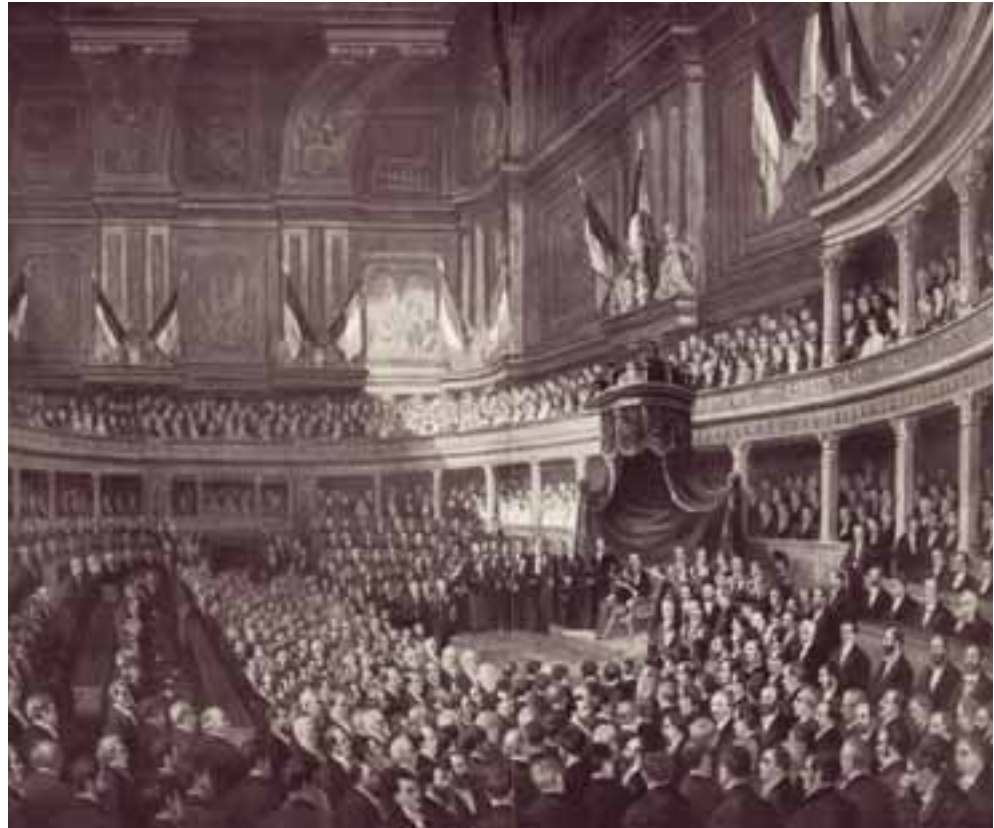




“ ... the Tricolored Flag, a pledge of our determination
to reaffirm, to defend, to strengthen national unity,
the cause to which many Italians pledged their
commitment and their lives”.

Giorgio Napolitano

From the address by the President of the Republic
on the occasion of Flag Day.
Reggio Emilia, January 7 2011.



Inauguration of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Italy. Turin, February 18 1861. Photo courtesy of the Library of the Chamber of Deputies. Rome.



Inauguration of the Constituent Assembly, Rome, 1946. Photo courtesy of the Library of the Chamber of Deputies.



Rome, March 31 1911.

The King and the Queen visit the Exhibition at the Palazzo delle Belle Arti, on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy. Photo courtesy of the Secretariat General of the Presidency of the Republic.



50th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy. His Majesty reads from the text of his address in Campidoglio. Photo courtesy of the Library of the Chamber of Deputies. Rome.



President of the Republic, Giovanni Gronchi, as he addresses Parliament on the occasion of the celebrations of the 100th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy in the Parliament.

Photo courtesy of the Library of the Chamber of Deputies. Rome.



President Giorgio Napolitano with the President of the Senate Renato Schifani and the President of the Chamber of the Deputies Gianfranco Fini, during his speech for the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the Unification of Italy in the Parliament (Palazzo Montecitorio).

Photo courtesy of the Press and Communication Office of the Presidency of Republic. Rome.





IL PALAZZO SUL POTOMAC

THE EMBASSY OF ITALY IN WASHINGTON

ON THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE UNIFICATION OF ITALY
AND OF THE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
BETWEEN ITALY AND UNITED STATES OF AMERICA







ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*We want to extend our deepest gratitude
to the following authorities for their help in finding significant
documents in their archives and authorising publication:*

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H.E. AMBASSADOR LUDOVICO ORTONA

H.E. AMBASSADOR RINALDO PETRIGNANI

H.E. AMBASSADOR FERDINANDO SALLEO

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DOTT. GIANDOMENICO ROMANELLI
Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia

DENNIS CECCHIN
Archivio Fotografico Museo Correr e Palazzo Ducale- Venezia

DOTT.SSA FRANCESCA GIORNI
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GALLERIA NAZIONALE DI ARTE ANTICA DI PALAZZO BARBERINI – ROMA

GALLERIA D'ARTE MODERNA – GENOVA

GALLERIA CESARE LAMPRONTI, ROMA-MILANO

MUSEO CIVICO AMEDEO LIA – LA SPEZIA

MUSEI CAPITOLINI – ROMA

MUSEO DI ROMA – ARCHIVIO FOTOGRAFICO

MUSEO DEL CASTELLO SFORZESCO – MILANO

MUSEO DI CAPODIMONTE – NAPOLI

MUSEO DI S.MARTINO – NAPOLI

MUSEO DELL'ALTO TAVOLIERE – SAN SEVERO (FG)

MUSEO DEL CASTELLO DI RACCONIGI – TORINO

MUSEO DI PALAZZO MOCENIGO – VENEZIA

MUSEO DEL SETTECENTO VENEZIANO, CA' REZZONICO – VENEZIA

MUSEO DEL RISORGIMENTO – ROMA

FONDAZIONE TORINO MUSEI – ARCHIVIO FOTOGRAFICO

FONDAZIONE MUSEI CIVICI – VENEZIA

PINACOTECA CAPITOLINA – ROMA

PAOLO GIANDOTTI
Press and Communication Office of the Presidency of the Republic – Photo Archives

FRANCESCO GENTILE
Ansa – Photo Archives

COMUNE DI GENOVA – PHOTO ARCHIVES

MUNICIPAL LIBRARY OF MONTEPULCIANO – PHOTO ARCHIVES

NATIONAL ITALIAN AMERICAN FOUNDATION (NIAF) – PHOTO ARCHIVES

MUSEO DEL PRADO – MADRID

NATIONAL GALLERY – LONDON

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART – WASHINGTON

PAUL GETTY MUSEUM – LOS ANGELES

WADSWORD ATHENEUM MUSEUM OF ART – HARTFORD

PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC – ROME

PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS – ROME

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS – ROME

MINISTRY OF PATRIMONY AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES – ROME

MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR – ROME

EMBASSY OF ITALY – BRUSSELS

EMBASSY OF ITALY – THE HAGUE

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ITALIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE – WASHINGTON

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ITALIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE – LOS ANGELES

ITALIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE – MIAMI

ITALIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE – NEW YORK

ITALIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE – SAN FRANCISCO

We also wish to express our appreciation to all those who, with such enthusiasm and dedication, contributed to making this publication a reality. In particular, we thank Prof. Sidsel Marie Hover and Dr. Francesco Johan Cortese for their invaluable contribution to the research on several chapters.



Giovanni Paolo Panini, Quirinale Square, (detail), oil on canvas, 1733. Photo courtesy of the Secretariat General of the Presidency of the Republic, Rome.





The Room of the factories of Paulus V – Cesare Rossetti and Ranuccio Semprevivo. Quirinale Palace seen from the gardens, detail of the frieze, fresco, 1609-1610. Photo courtesy of the Secretariat General of the Presidency of the Republic, Rome.

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Carlo Saraceni – Diplomatic Mission of the King of Persia – Detail of fresco (1616). Palazzo del Quirinale – Salone dei Corazzieri. Photo courtesy of the Secretariat General of the Presidency of the Republic.

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Agostino Tassi and his assistants – Diplomatic Mission of Congo – Detail of fresco (1616-1617). Photo courtesy of the Secretariat General of the Presidency of the Republic.

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Detail of decoration of the wall with the frescos by Agostino Tassi. Below is the frieze with the initials of Gaetano Lodi. Palazzo del Quirinale – Salone dei Corazzieri. Photo courtesy of the Secretariat General of the Presidency of the Republic.


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Italian Fantasy, oil on canvas by Dutch painter Pierre Henri Theodore Teta van Elven (1828-1908). Son and pupil of Jan Baptiste, he studied Fine Arts at the University of Amsterdam in 1846 and later in The Hague. Photo courtesy of Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Genova, Photographic archives, Comune di Genova

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



I wish to express my profound gratitude to the President of the Republic, Giorgio Napolitano, for unveiling this volume on the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy and of the diplomatic relations between Italy and the United States of America.

I extend special thanks to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata, former Ambassador of the Republic of Italy to the United States of America, for this opportunity to carry out such an important project and for kindly accepting to write the chapter "The Palace, the Flag".

I wish to extend special appreciation to the current Ambassador of the Republic of Italy to the United States of America, Claudio Bisogniero, and the Ambassador of the United States to Italy, David Thorne, for their contributions.

I also wish to thank architect Piero Sartogo for having been a part of our initiative from the beginning and for contributing the section that describes our celebrated diplomatic chancery in Washington.

Gaetano Cortese



The Study of the President of the Republic. Photo by Mario Quattrone. Image courtesy of the Secretariat General of the Presidency of the Republic.



Il Presidente della Repubblica Italiana

I wish to extend my warmest greetings to the readers of this inspired book dedicated to the *Palace on the Potomac*, seat of the magnificent Chancery the Embassy of Italy in Washington.

With the talented design of Architect Piero Sartogo, Italy gained a headquarters that not only represents Italian tradition and style but also acknowledges the responsibilities and dedication of our diplomatic representatives making use of the new spaces. In particular, I wish to recall His Excellency Boris Biancheri, who recently passed away: formerly Italy's Ambassador to the United States, he had laid the groundwork for the new building and while in Washington oversaw the final bidding process. The Chancery was inaugurated in 2000 during the mission of Ambassador Ferdinando Salleo.

The volume is rich in images and provides enlightening historical and cultural background as it follows the long history of political and diplomatic relations between Italy and the United States. In this year, as we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the completion of Italy's national unification, we should remember the now indissoluble bonds forged by common roots and aspirations that joined the beginning of our history as a Nation with the first cry of the then-fledgling American democracy.

In this spirit, I extend my appreciation to Ambassador Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata for having proposed this initiative and for the care and attention of Ambassador Gaetano Cortese in carrying it through.

Happy reading!

Palazzo del Quirinale, September, 5 2011

GIORGIO NAPOLITANO

(Courtesy translation)

The President
of the United States of America
Barack Obama



Photo <http://www.whitehouse.gov/copyright>.



Oval Office. Photo by Bruce White for the White House Historical Association.

Presidential Proclamation 150th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy

A PROCLAMATION

On March 17, Italy celebrates the 150th anniversary of its unification as a single state. On this day, we join with Italians everywhere to honor the courage, sacrifice, and vision of the patriots who gave birth to the Italian nation. At a time when the United States was fighting for the preservation of our own Union, Giuseppe Garibaldi's campaign for the unification of Italy inspired many around the world in their own struggles, including the 39th New York Infantry, also known as "The Garibaldi Guard." Today, the legacy of Garibaldi and all those who unified Italy lives on in the millions of American women and men of Italian descent who strengthen and enrich our Nation.

Italy and the United States are bound by friendship and common dedication to civil liberties, democratic principles, and the universal human rights our countries both respect and uphold. As we mark this important milestone in Italian history, we also honor the joint efforts of Americans and Italians to foster freedom, democracy, and our shared values throughout the world.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 17, 2011, as a day to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy. I encourage all Americans to learn more about the history of Italian unification and to honor the enduring friendship between the people of Italy and the people of the United States.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA

The proclamation of President Barack Obama has a famous precedent: a speech by then President John Fitzgerald Kennedy in Washington exactly fifty years ago, March 16th 1961, on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy. According to Giulio Terzi, Minister of Foreign Affairs and former Ambassador of Italy to the United States, the Proclamation "is an extraordinary sign of friendship from President Obama who wanted to give testimony of the closeness of his country on the occasion of an anniversary which is very important for all Italians, including those living in the United States".



Washington, October 29 2011. Gala of the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF). Photo courtesy of the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF).

Remarks by President Barack Obama at the National Italian American Foundation Gala

THE PRESIDENT: Hello, hello, hello! (Applause.) Thank you so much. (Applause.) Viva Italia! (Applause.) Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you. Thank you so much. (Applause.) Thank you, Nancy, for that generous introduction. I am biased, but I think Nancy was one of the best Speakers of the House this country ever had. (Applause.) She was no doubt the best Italian American Speaker of the House we ever had. (Applause.) And I believe that she will be the best Speaker of the House again in 2013. (Applause.)

Now, I was just out passing out Halloween candy – (laughter) – for the kids who were coming to the White House, but now that Malia and Sasha are with their friends, they do not notice that I’m gone. (Laughter.) They’re now getting to that age where they don’t care. (Laughter.) They’re pleased that I didn’t embarrass them too much during the brief time I was with them.

So I am honored to be here to celebrate National Italian American Heritage Month and to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Italian unification. (Applause.) And I want to congratulate the President, the Chairman, all of you who are doing so much work to keep that heritage alive for the next generation. And I’m grateful for your generous welcome. (Applause.)

Now, I want to make a confession right off the bat. I do not, in fact, have any Italian ancestry. (Laughter.) Not all of us are that lucky. (Laughter.) I can’t sing like Frankie Avalon. (Laughter.) Where’s Frankie? I can’t – he looks the same! Unbelievable. (Laughter and applause.) I can’t cook as well as any of your grandmothers. (Laughter.) Michelle won’t let me have seconds or thirds anymore. (Laughter.) So all I’ve got to offer is a last name that ends in a vowel. (Laughter and applause.) That’s all I’ve got. (Applause.)

Nevertheless, it is good to see so many amici. (Laughter.) I see many proud sons and daughters of the old country. I see a couple dozen proud Italian American members of Congress here tonight. Let me offer a special welcome to the guests who join us from Italy this evening, including Italy’s ambassador to the United States, Ambassador Terzi. Thank you so much for your outstanding work. (Applause.) His counterpart – here, as well, and he is doing an outstanding job representing us, our ambassador to Italy, David Thorne. (Applause.) Italy is one of our strongest allies, a fellow founding member of NATO. We look forward to our work together with them, and we’re going to be joining them next week at the G20 to make a series of decisions that are going to be very important for the world economy.

I’ve also made sure to keep close the advice of Italian Americans by asking some of them to serve in my Cabinet. And as Nancy mentioned, we could not be



Washington, October 29 2011. Gala of the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF). Photo courtesy of the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF).

prouder of Janet Napolitano, who is keeping us safe every single day. (Applause.) And my outstanding Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta. (Applause.) And, as was mentioned, even though she's not here these evening, Jill Biden is proud to come from a long line of Giacoppas. And so she sends her regards. (Applause.)

Tonight, I think it's also important for us to honor the proud service of the countless Italian Americans who have fought for this country since our founding, and who wear the uniform today – (applause) – from the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Ray Odierno, – (applause) – to a hero whom I was proud to bestow our nation's highest military decoration, and was the first one in a very long time to personally receive the Medal of Honor, staff sergeant Salvatore Giunta. (Applause.)

So in a sense, every American joins us in celebrating this anniversary of Italian unification. What would America be without the contributions of Italy and Italian Americans? (Applause.) What would we be without the daring voyages of Columbus, and Verrazano, and Vespucci? What would our science and technology be without not just DaVinci and Galileo, but Fermi? What would movies and music be without the magic of Capra, or Sinatra, or Sophia Loren, my favorite. (Laughter.) I'm just saying. (Laughter.)

What would sports be without the guts and the grit of Di Maggio and Lombardi – and La Russa? (Applause.)

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Piazza!

THE PRESIDENT: Piazza! (Laughter and applause.) The White Sox could still use you. (Laughter.) What would this city be without the influence of Roman thought and architecture, the Piccirilli Brothers who – their work on the Lincoln Memorial; Brumidi's magnificent touch on the Capitol?

Although, I must say, it might be nice to know what our politics would – like without the contribution of Machiavelli. (Laughter.) That's been internalized a little too much here in Washington. (Laughter.)

America would not be what it is today without the unique contributions and the uncommon pride of Italian Americans. (Applause.) And like so many other groups – as Nancy said, like so many other groups, the Italians came to America in search of opportunity. They came with little. Very few were wealthy. But they came with an unwavering faith in God, an unfailing commitment to family, and an unlikely hope in the possibilities of America – the belief that in this country, you could be prosperous, you could be free, you could think and talk and worship as you pleased. It was a place where you could make it if you try.

And it wasn't always easy. Italians weren't always welcome. And when we think about today's immigrants, we have to remind ourselves that those of us who now feel comfortable in our American identity, that that wasn't always the case in the past. (Applause.) The opportunities our forbears hoped for wasn't always within



Washington, October 29 2011. Gala of the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF). Photo courtesy of the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF).



Washington, October 29 2011. Gala of the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF). Photo courtesy of the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF).

reach right away. But they did not wait for anybody to hand it to them. They built new lives for themselves, and at the same time they ended up building an entire nation. They enriched our heritage and our culture with their own. They helped forge the very promise of this country – that success is possible if you're willing to work for it. And those efforts built a better America for all of us.

Everybody in this room just about, everybody, has an ancestor or lots of ancestors who fit that story of transplanted roots that somehow grew in American soil; of families that struggled and sacrificed so that our families might know something better. Of parents who said, maybe I can't speak English, but I'll make sure my child can speak English; they might teach English someday. (Applause.) I might not have an education, but I'm going to make sure my child has an education. (Applause.) I might perform backbreaking labor today, but someday my child can be a Senator, or a Supreme Court Justice, or Speaker of the House, or a Secretary in the Cabinet, or President of the United States. (Applause.)

So that's what binds us together. That is what has always made our country unique. We've always been and we will always be a nation of immigrants from all over the world. And out of many, somehow we're able to forge ourselves into one people; and this is the place where the highest hopes can be reached, and the deepest and most sincere dreams can be made real.

And that's the legacy our forebears left for us, and that's what we now have to leave to our children. These are tough times right now, and millions of Americans are hurting. Millions are without work, and those who have work are still all too often struggling to get by. And for many, the dream that brought so many Italian Americans to these shores feels like it's slipping away.

So we've got work to do. But while these times are hard, we have to remind ourselves they're not as hard as those that earlier generations faced. And the legacy of their courage and their commitment and their determination and their generosity and their willingness to think about the next generation – we have to be just as passionate and just as selfless as they were to keep that dream alive, and make sure our children inherit futures that are big and bright, and that this country is as generous as it's always been.

And that's what we have to commit to ourselves tonight. So on behalf of all Americans, I want to thank you for everything that the Italian American community has done; everything that you've done to contribute to the chronicles and the character of the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you, so much. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Thank you. (Applause.)

The President of the Italian Republic

Giorgio Napolitano



President Giorgio Napolitano during the meeting with representatives of the Italian community, on the occasion of the celebrations of the 150th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy, in New York. Photo courtesy of the Press and Communication Office of the Presidency of the Republic.



View of Sala d'Ercole. Palazzo del Quirinale. Photo by Mario Quattrone. Image courtesy of the Secretariat General of the Presidency of the Republic.

ADDRESS BY
PRESIDENT OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC
GIORGIO NAPOLITANO

AT THE MEETING WITH A DELEGATION OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY

New York, March 27 2011

150 New Yorkers celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy

Let me first all thank you for having organized this magnificent event to celebrate together the 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy.

It is particularly touching for me, as President of the Italian Republic, to share with you such a historical moment.

President Obama, in his impressive proclamation on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Italian unification, celebrated “the courage, sacrifice and vision of the patriots who gave birth” to the Italian State. He added that “at a time when the United States was fighting for the preservation of our own Union, Giuseppe Garibaldi’s campaign for the unification of Italy inspired many around the world in their own struggles, including the 39th New York Infantry, also known as the Garibaldi Guard”.

I am deeply grateful to President Obama for such a Proclamation and to the Congress for the Congressional Record.

Pride and trust: these are two words I have insisted upon in my address in front of the Italian Parliament on the 17th of March. The Italian unification has represented an extraordinary historical accomplishment, despite severe difficulties and gloom forecasts; the centuries – long path of the idea of Italy, fostered by paramount messages of language, literature and culture, had eventually come to an end.

Next Tuesday I will pay tribute to Ellis Island and the 4 million Italian immigrants that arrived there. Italy will never forget his sons who were obliged to leave their country in search of a better future.

The historical record is crystal clear: before unification, the living conditions in 1861 Italy were mostly painful and unsatisfactory, with high rates of disease, illiteracy, poverty. The newly born State created the premises for the modernization of the country and for gradual social progress but could not, for quite a long time, afford to provide an acceptable future for all Italians. Emigration sadly became a necessity.



View of Sala Gialla. Palazzo del Quirinale. Photo by G. Ricci, Novara-Parigi. Image courtesy of the Secretariat General of the Presidency of the Republic.

Songs, poems, novels and films have masterly depicted the sorrow of the departure, the difficulties of the arrival, the opportunities opened by the new life. You know it all too well: the pain, the struggle, the success.

Italy is grateful to the United States for the opportunities given to our citizen. Far from the rigidity of the European social structure in those days, America was ready to reward hard work and commitment, to promote social advancements, to celebrate the self made man. More generally, America was able to create an intense feeling of belonging and allegiance in the individual while recognizing his pursuit of happiness.

I have today the pleasure of being in front of you and, out of your positions and contributions to the American society, I can immediately grasp the immense results attained by the community of Italian origin. I am profoundly touched by the genuine affection that you feel toward our Country. You have a major and successful role in promoting values and qualities associated with Italy.

No one better than Geraldine Ferraro embodied the Italian contribution to the American dream. Today we mourn her loss. She has left a legacy in the political life and in the American society which will last forever. All Italian Americans can be proud of her.

Taking into account our special relationship, I gave my patronage to the programme of events Italy@150. I am grateful to Ambassador Terzi and to the Embassy of Italy for the organization of such celebrations and I am impressed by the several events spontaneously carried out everywhere in the States to celebrate our anniversary, thanks to the exceptional dynamism of the Italian community.

I would also like to thank the Conference of the Presidents of the most important Italian – American organizations for their invaluable help in attaining an essential result, the insertion of the Italian language in the Advanced Placement program and thus in the secondary education here in the States.

The promotion of Italian is an absolute priority because language is the first tool to spread an updated knowledge of Italy, far from platitudes and clichés. Furthermore, the Italian idiom is one of the most ancient and noble cultural forces that have united our Country and kept our citizens together and cohesive abroad.

It would be impossible to pay a tribute to all the prominent Italians who lived in the States and specifically in New York. In this special occasion I wish to celebrate two outstanding personalities: Antonio Meucci, who was at the same time many things, emigrant, new Yorker, patriot of the Risorgimento, inventor of the telephone, and Giuseppe Garibaldi, who lived also in New York as Meucci guest and exchanged letters with Abraham Lincoln, in a spirit of mutual admiration.



View of Sala degli Ambasciatori. Palazzo del Quirinale. Photo by G. Ricci. Image courtesy of the Secretariat General of the Presidency of the Republic.

The present world, as I am going to state tomorrow in my speech at the United Nations General Assembly, is filled with opportunities, challenges and contradictions. The years ahead will not be easy for anybody, and in particular for Italy. But I am glad I can say to you today that in the past few days the celebrations of our 150th anniversary have seen a new spirit emerging through a massive and enthusiastic popular participation to all initiatives taking place in all parts of Italy. The new spirit of pride and trust that I evoked; a new will to reinforce our national cohesion and unity, because this is the condition to overcome the difficulties which are in front of us. Yes, we shall overcome.



Salone dei Corazzieri. Palazzo del Quirinale. Mounted Guard stand by in full dress uniform when foreign Ambassador present their credentials to the Head of State. Photo courtesy of the Press and Communication Office of the Presidency of the Republic.





Palazzo del Quirinale, September 4 2009. The Ambassador of the United States of America, David Thorne, presents his credentials to the President of the Republic, Giorgio Napolitano. In the centre of the picture, the Chief of Protocol Ambassador Leonardo Visconti di Modrone. To the right the Deputy Secretary General for Documentation and Foreign Relations of the Presidency, dott. Filippo Romano. Photo courtesy of the Press and Communication Office of the Presidency of Republic.



Palazzo del Quirinale, September 4 2009. The Ambassador of the United States of America presents his credentials to the President of the Republic, Giorgio Napolitano. Photo courtesy of the Press and Communications Office of the Presidency of the Republic.



Salone dei Corazzieri. Palazzo del Quirinale. Mounted Guard stand by in full dress uniform when foreign Ambassador present their credentials to the Head of State. Photo courtesy of the Press and Communication Office of the Presidency of the Republic.





One of the five Stradivari of the Smithsonian collection starring in a concert held at Villa Firenze, February 15th 2011. Among those in attendance, then Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi and Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.



Washington, Villa Firenze, February 2011.

H.E. the Minister of Foreign Affairs Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata, then Ambassador of the Republic of Italy to the United States of America with then Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.



1961. The 35th President of the United States of America, John F. Kennedy. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.

“THE PALACE, THE FLAG”

As I had opportunity to illustrate also before Parliament last November, there is a strong demand for Italy in the world that requires an articulated and concrete response. In my mission as Minister of Foreign Affairs, I am thus seeking to strengthen our country's International role along four tracks: European, Transatlantic, Mediterranean, and Global. In this framework, relations with the United States are absolutely strategic.

There is no escaping the fact that despite the emergence of new powers when it comes time to face matters that are vital to international security — from the stabilization of Afghanistan to the sanctions against Iran and Syria — cooperation between the two shores of the Atlantic remains fundamental. At the same time, the connection between the United States and Europe is decisive to progress in globalization, not only in communications and markets, but also in civil and political rights. Last, but not least, we have the quality and quantity of transatlantic economic cooperation: they represent a central datum on a global scale: just remember that every day Europe and the United States exchange 2 billion dollars in goods and services, accounting for 40 per cent of world trade.

If the centrality of the transatlantic relationship is etched in the history of our country and in the long-standing bonds of friendship between our two peoples, these relations were further enriched in my



March 29 2011. The Embassy of Italy in Washington organized Global Energy Forum 2011. Those in attendance included Nobel prize winners, administrators, and representatives of the private sector. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.

particular case by a long permanence in this country, most recently as Ambassador of Italy to the United States, an experience that, in a way, I had the opportunity to share when this publication was first issued in the Italian version. I went through the notes I wrote few months ago. They could have been written today and perhaps they could still be written tomorrow.

There is a moment, a precise reference in space and time, during my mission in Washington that captures, as in a snapshot, the intensity — including emotional — of the relationship between Italy and the United States, as well as the identity in culture and values that have bound our two communities long before they became nations.

Just a few days before March 17, 2011, at the peak in the United States of the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of Italy's unification, I was in my study at Villa Firenze showing then Speaker Nancy Pelosi a copy of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy's March 16, 1961, address in tribute to Italy's centennial that had his personal handwritten notations in the margins — three typewritten pages discovered in the presidential archives bearing Kennedy's personal amendments to the original version. The amendments added vitality in the form of stirring assertions of his great esteem and friendship for Italy and Italian Americans and references to the Risorgimento and the values of liberty, justice, and respect for humanity that had inspired both Italian patriots and the Founding Fathers of the U.S. constitution. My friend Nancy Pelosi told me that she would bring this to the attention of the President that very next day. She did so, called me on the phone shortly afterward, and in a very contented tone told me that President Obama would be issuing a Proclamation of his own.

Time and again, I have received proof at all levels, institutional and personal, that Italians and Americans hold closely shared convictions, whether





New York Times journalist during the Urbino Press Award Ceremony. A regular appointment for Washington media to celebrate the excellence of American journalism as an instrument of liberty. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.

on broad issues of international affairs or on human sentiments and actions. Thus far, there has been no greater evidence than that shown by the former Speaker of the House, a legendary member of the Italian-American community, as she read Kennedy's warm words reflecting the common destiny of the two nations: "this country of ours, (...) was opened up by (...) an Italian, Christopher Columbus. Yet this country was nearly a century old when modern Italy began. (...) Italy and the United States, past, present, and we believe future."

This flashback to 1961 is followed—fifty years later, yet without gaps—by President Barack Obama's Proclamation of March 16, 2011, honoring the 150th anniversary of Italy's unification and celebrating the "friendship and common dedication to civil liberties, democratic principles, and the universal human rights our countries both respect and uphold."

Nancy Pelosi confided to me that John Fitzgerald Kennedy's words had inspired President Obama in his gesture of great friendship toward Italy: a Proclamation, a formal message that the President addresses to all Americans in the most solemn of circumstances. He had followed the example of the man who fifty years earlier had shown Americans a *New Frontier* of "challenges, not promises," in which the contribution of immigrants was essential, and the quota system for Italians 'intolerable'. Obama's Proclamation and Kennedy's speech are an extraordinary connection between the worlds of the 'new frontier' and the 'yes we can'. Italians in America are an emblematic part because of their contribution to the intellectual, economic, and cultural progress of the United States.

Obama's America, despite the extraordinary difficulties of our time, moves forward in the march beyond the *New Frontier*, at home and abroad, with a renewed spirit and a multilateral approach. Italy—now that it too has become a country of immigrants (like the 'Nation of Immigrants'





October 12 2010. Global Health Forum at the Embassy of Italy (from the left: Dr. Carol Greider, 2009 Nobel prize in Physiology and Medicine; Prof. Ferruccio Fazio, Minister of Health; H.E. the Minister of Foreign Affairs Giulio Terzi Sant'Agata, then Ambassador of the Republic of Italy to United States of America; Rear-Admiral Susan J. Blumenthal, (MD-MPA). Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.



Enrico Fermi, to whom is dedicated the Fermi Laboratory, the biggest accelerator of particles in the USA. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.

described by John Fitzgerald Kennedy in his 1958 essay)—is closer than ever to the United States and shares its international responsibilities in upholding the principles of solidarity and security: Italy is a determined and crucial ally for Washington from Afghanistan to North Africa. Cooperation, in all crisis areas where international security, and thus that of both our countries, is at stake, has never been greater and is clearly perceived by U.S. public opinion: Italy “does not flinch.”

This year, 2012, as we wind down the celebrations in the United States under the auspices of the President of the Republic commemorating the 150th anniversary of Italy’s Unification, is the ideal moment in time to illustrate, in a publication of exceptional quality, all that “Il Palazzo sul Potomac” and Villa Firenze symbolize in Washington. During this period, the Chancery and Villa Firenze have hosted splendid and incomparable events, some of which are memorialized in this volume.

There is spontaneous appeal of ‘all things Italian’ in the United States. The dissemination of the Italian language in American schools is a primary example, also because it is one of our foreign policy priorities, particularly in the promotion of Italy and its excellences in the cultural and economic sectors. The United States is experiencing an increasing demand for Italian, no longer as an ethnic language, but as a universal language of culture and art. This demand reflects another “bridge” between the two visions—Kennedy’s and Obama’s: the study of the languages, cultures, and history of other countries as an important instrument in our international relations (the definition utilized in August 1960 by then-Democratic Presidential Candidate John Fitzgerald Kennedy) is summoned back, exactly fifty years later, in the White House document on National Security Strategy and by President Obama himself in his Proclamation for Italy’s 150th where he





May 7 2011. Open House at the Embassy of Italy of Italy with 6500 guests celebrating Europe Day with the showing of the best Made in Italy in the sectors of technology and mobility. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.

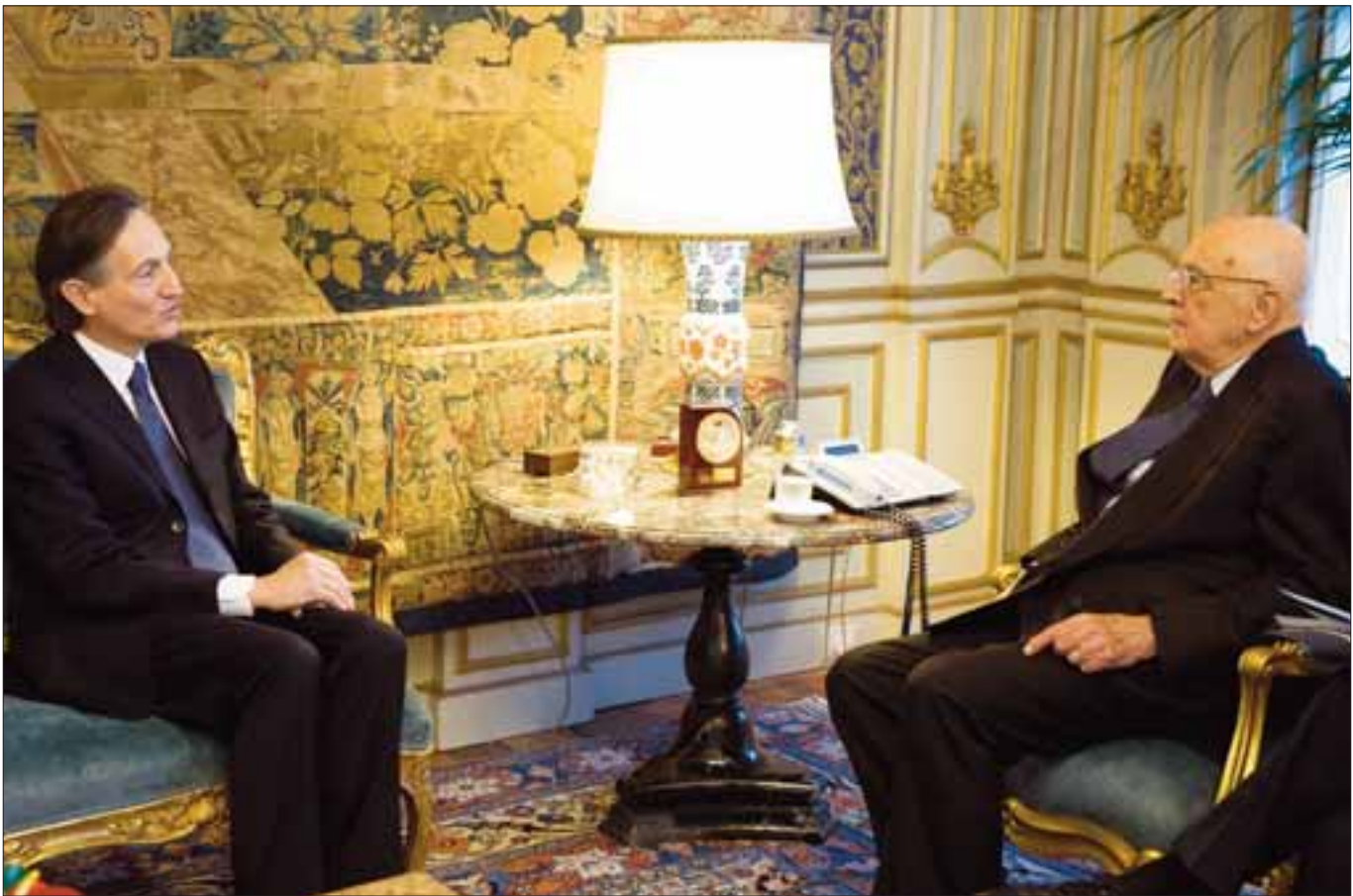
invites “all Americans to learn more about the history of Italian unification”

In the past decade, the number of university students enrolled in Italian language classes increased from 49,000 to over 80,000, while at the high school level there are approximately 70,000 students of Italian. In response to this high demand, the Government of Italy, with the support of the Italian-American community and Italian firms operating in the United States, was able to reinstate Italian, starting in 2011, among the courses that allow students to obtain college level credits while still in high school.

These examples illustrate the depth of a perception, not only by Institutions and the Government, but also by the people, by Americans, that Italy and ‘being Italian’ are compellingly positive and winning values, as proven by our Country in the past and still today through its Italian-American sons and daughters and their children and grandchildren. To borrow the words used by President Obama in his first Columbus Day Proclamation in 2009, they are “role models, leaders, innovators, and committed public servants. From the boardroom to the classroom, they are prominent in every facet of American life.”

Giulio Terzi di Sant’Agata
Minister of Foreign Affairs
former Ambassador of the Republic of Italy
to the United States of America





Palazzo del Quirinale, December 27, 2011. President Giorgio Napolitano with the new Ambassador of Italy to Washington, Claudio Bisogniero. Photo courtesy of the Press and Communication Office of the Presidency of the Republic.

ADDRESS BY THE AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Claudio Bisogniero



Palazzo del Quirinale, December 27, 2011. President Giorgio Napolitano with the new Ambassador of Italy to Washington, Claudio Bisogniero. Photo courtesy of the Press and Communication Office of the Presidency of the Republic.

From my very first days in Washington, this time as Ambassador of Italy to United States, I immediately sensed the breadth and depth of the relationship between Italy and the United States. The first proof came when I presented my Letters of Credence to President Obama; the words he used to describe Italy's contribution to peace were unequivocal: "we don't have a closer ally, as I always say." The second came during the visit to Washington by the President of the Council of Ministers, Mario Monti, accompanied by Minister of Foreign Affairs, Giulio Terzi. The welcome reserved for our Prime Minister from interlocutors and media alike, clearly revealed not only respect for him, but also an endorsement of the reforms set under way by our government and the key role that it can play in balancing Europe's debate on the debt crisis while at the same time stressing growth.

There is no clearer proof that the friendship between Italy and the United States is exceptional than our bilateral cooperation in a host of fields. A long list that includes: the promotion of security: Italian and U.S. forces operate together in areas from Afghanistan to Kosovo; economic collaboration: Italian companies have sizeable investments in this country's major high tech industries, automotive, aeronautics, energy, defense, naval construction, and biotech; scientific cooperation: 15,000 researchers and scholars, either Italian or of Italian descent, currently work in the United States in medicine, chemistry and physics; and space cooperation: numerous joint programs from 1964



White House - Washington DC, February 9, 2012. Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero with US President Barack Obama at the White House in Washington DC. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.



August, 4 2011. Then Deputy Chief of Mission, Gian Lorenzo Cornado with Italian Astronauts Roberto Vittori and Paolo Nespoli, holding emblems of the last missions to the International Space Station. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.

to the Shuttle Endeavor's last mission in May 2011 that carried Italian astronaut Roberto Vittori.

These are today's fruit of a longstanding relationship. The dialogue between Italy and the United States radiates from a vigorous tree of shared history that is deeply rooted in the fertile soil of freedom and equality underlying our national identities. What makes this relationship so unique is that the bond of culture and ideals joined our two peoples even before 1776 and 1861 when they became nations.

Our bond dates back to ancient Rome, expands through the Renaissance to then flourish in the Enlightenment and Risorgimento. When drafting the Constitution the Founding Fathers drew inspiration from the Republic of Rome. In the system governed by Roman law, the sovereignty of the people was guided by the wisdom of the Senate, which had a strong Executive – Commander-in-Chief – in the person of the Consul; civic virtue was respected; and the welfare of the community prevailed over individual interests. These principles were revived, preserved and transmitted through the Italian Renaissance and carried forward the ideals of democracy, rule of law, individual freedom, respect of human dignity, and equality regardless of race or creed. These values have inspired the shaping of our Nations and become the cornerstones of our constitutional systems.

The important points of contact between the Enlightenment and the Risorgimento, on the one hand, and the political philosophies of the Founding Fathers, on the other, merit special mention. I am thinking, for example, of the strong friendship and exchange of ideas between Filippo Mazzei and Thomas Jefferson and the frequent correspondence between Gaetano Filangieri and Benjamin Franklin.

Fifty years ago, as Italy commemorated the one hundredth anniversary of its Unification, President John F. Kennedy recalled the treasures of the bonds, cultural and ideal, between Italy and the United States in noble terms: "All of us, in a large sense, are beneficiaries of the Italian experience. It is an extraordinary fact in history that so



Roman Republic 1849. Flag. Photo courtesy of Museo del Risorgimento di Roma.



Villa Firenze, February 9, 2012. Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero with Prime Minister Mario Monti. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.

much of what we are, and so much of what we believe had its origins in this rather small spear of land stretching into the Mediterranean. All in a great sense that we fight to preserve today had its origins in Italy. [...]. From the banks of the Tiber there rose Western civilization as we know it, a civilization whose tradition and spiritual values give great significance to Western life as we find it in Western Europe and in the Atlantic community.”

These then are the historical and cultural roots of the relationship between Italy and the United States, and we should never forget the many who have enriched its development and growth over time. Were there space, I would try to cite them all, but as we are celebrating the building that is home to the Embassy of Italy, the figure of Andrea Palladio rises prominently.

Palladio's ideas, his sense of proportion, aesthetics, classicism, have profoundly influenced American architecture. Thomas Jefferson looked to Palladio with absolute reverence. The designs for Monticello, his neo-classical mansion in Virginia, like his sketches for the White House, deeply echo Palladio's creativity and artistry. The architecture of the U.S. capital city is quintessential Italian classicism, with unmistakable allusions to ancient Rome. That the Mayors of the two cities signed a sister city agreement last year thus comes as no surprise. The friendship between our countries is ‘sculpted’ in the neoclassical icons of U.S. democracy: the White House, the Capitol (with Costantino Brumidi's splendid frescoes), the Washington Monument, the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, the Supreme Court.

In this context, our Embassy, *Il Palazzo sul Potomac* is another icon. Architecturally, because of the way in which it reconciles Italy and the United States in allusions to the original plan of the city, with the river intersecting it, and the tradition of Tuscan villas with medieval buttresses. Politically and culturally, together with Villa Firenze, our chancery has become center stage for the most prestigious events in the nation's capital. It continued in this starring role during the celebra-



The Ambassador of Italy to the US, Claudio Bisogniero, as he addresses his guests at the dinner he hosted in honor of the visit of the President of the Council of Ministers, Prof. Mario Monti, to the United States. To his left, the President's wife, Mrs. Elsa Monti. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.



The President of the Chamber of Deputies, Gianfranco Fini, holds a Press Conference at the Capital Building after his meetings with members of the US Congress on March 5, 2012. From the left: Counselor Luca Gori, Embassy of Italy Spokesman, the Ambassador of Italy to the US, Claudio Bisogniero, the President of the Chamber of Deputies, Gianfranco Fini, and his Spokesman, Fabrizio Alfano. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.



Villa Firenze, February 9, 2012. Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero with the Minister of Foreign Affairs Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.

tions commemorating the 150th anniversary of Italian unification, not the least of which was the magnificent concert (March 17, 2011) attended by 800 guests featuring the Bari Teatro Petruzzelli Orchestra under the baton of celebrated Maestro Lorin Maazel.

Of course, the soul and genius of the relationship between Italy and the United States is nurtured by the contribution of Italian Americans. According to the last official census, 17 million Americans claim Italian descent, 2.3 million more than a decade ago. They are the backbone of the friendship between our countries. As President Obama underscored in his Proclamation for the 150th Anniversary of Italian Unification, they have made ‘incalculable contributions’ to ‘building’ the United States. “What would America be” – the President asked numerous times in his remarks at the 2011 NIAF Gala – “without the contributions of Italy and Italian Americans? What would we be without the daring voyages of Columbus, and Verrazzano and Vespucci? What would our science and technology be without not just Da Vinci and Galileo, but Fermi? What would movies and music be without the magic of Capra, or Sinatra, or Sophia Loren?”

His words remind us all that the history of America is a story of immigration, as chronicled in President John F. Kennedy’s 1958 classic essay, *A Nation of Immigrants*. America is a ‘Nation of Nations’ ready to accept those from foreign lands who choose to embrace its ideals, values, and rules. Its strength lies in its ability to generate unity, not uniformity, among different cultures and traditions (*E pluribus unum*). The same welcoming spirit that has always characterized Italy as well. It is one more tile in the brilliant mosaic that draws on the wealth, singularity, and agelessness of the archetypal cultural bond that *Il Palazzo sul Potomac* symbolizes and represents.



The Ambassador of Italy to the US, Claudio Bisogniero, with US Supreme Court Justice, Antonin Scalia at the reception prior to the dinner the Ambassador hosted in honor of the visit of the President of the Council of Ministers, Prof. Mario Monti, to the United States. In the background the President of the Council of Ministers, Prof. Mario Monti. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.



The President of the United States of America, Barack Obama while he addresses the NIAF gala at the Washington Hilton, October 29, 2011. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy in Washington.



Palazzo Margherita, seat of the Embassy of the United States of America. Photo courtesy of the American Embassy in Rome.





Giuseppe Garibaldi. Photo courtesy of Museo del Risorgimento – Roma.



Embassy of the United States of America

I would like to express my sincere appreciation and deep gratitude to the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Giulio Maria Terzi di Sant'Agata, as well as the Italian Ambassador to the United States, Claudio Bisogniero and Ambassador Gaetano Cortese, for the publication of this wonderful book "The Palace On The Potomac," on the occasion of the 150th anniversary celebration of Italy's unification. This book represents an expression of the deep and lasting friendship which has always existed between our two nations.

In fact, Italy and the United States have boasted very close relations since the time of Italian unification. In a heartfelt congratulatory letter that Giuseppe Garibaldi and his sons wrote to President Lincoln in 1863 about the abolition of slavery, the "Hero Of The Two Worlds" referred to Italians as the "free sons of Columbus." The Italians were sincere and passionate admirers of the American Revolution and the ideals of freedom which it embodied. In the wake of this enthusiasm and empathy, they managed to undertake those heroic acts which enabled Italy to finally achieve the unity that we proudly celebrate today.

The book, which recalls the history of a place and a building, celebrates a friendship that began about two centuries ago and which is bound by deep roots and strong motivations. It is a bond that is reflected in the millions of people who have found in the United States a new life, a prosperous future, a place to freely profess and express their own religious beliefs and thoughts.

America, which opened its doors to immigrants coming from every Italian region, today celebrates its old friendship with Italy through the heartfelt words of President Obama, celebrating not only the anniversary of Italy's unity but also our common roots, the fundamental principles of freedom that we share, and the aspirations that give hope to our future. In fact, President Obama has paid tribute to Italy by officially proclaiming March 17th as the "Day of celebration of the 150th anniversary of Italy's unification" and has called upon his fellow Americans "To learn more about the unification of Italy and its history."



Palazzo Margherita, seat of the Embassy of the United States of America. Photo courtesy of the American Embassy in Rome.

The ties between our two great countries are, to this day, stronger than ever. Currently, there are 145 American academic institutions that are present in Italy. As a result, approximately 30,000 American students attend classes every year in different areas, therefore exposing them to Italian life and culture. At the same time, the study of the Italian language is very popular in the United States with an increasing number of young Americans learning to appreciate not only Italy's history but also its traditions, its cultural, literary and artistic patrimony as well as its fine food and wines. In this regard, I believe it is appropriate to emphasize the important role played by the many cultural exchange programs that allow young Italians and Americans to spend time in either America or Italy. This gives them the opportunity to attend specific academic courses and to conduct research into areas of common interest.

I would therefore like to conclude by renewing my deepest appreciation for this wonderful book, an extraordinary symbol of friendship between Italy and the United States.

David H. Thorne
Ambassador of the United States of America
to the Republic of Italy
and the Republic of San Marino



View of the garden of Villa Taverna, Residence of the Ambassador of the United States of America. Photo courtesy of the American Embassy in Rome.

