

# Fatherland, Nation and State as Seen by Progressive Catholics and by Lyndon LaRouche

by Nino Galloni

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In my intervention I would like to demonstrate the modernity of the contribution of two major representatives of Italian progressive Catholicism, Giuseppe Dossetti and Luigi Sturzo; and of a Christian thinker, Lyndon LaRouche, whose brilliance we celebrate today.

Indeed, I have known Mr. LaRouche’s work, and frequently met Lyndon himself and his collaborators, in every part of Europe and of the planet in the course of about fifteen years; I met Dossetti just two times and I never met Sturzo.

My father—a statesman who played a crucial role in the history of the Italian Republic and was a scholar of international repute in the political and agricultural sciences, evaluated LaRouche’s works and became LaRouche’s friend—was a follower and a pupil of Dossetti and, like all Christian Democrats (DC), respectful of Sturzo’s thought and coherence.

## Italian Politics

I did not miss the critical nuances relating to not only Dossetti and my father, but even those of DC leader, Alcide De Gasperi—criticisms that have been kept somehow secret, or perhaps better said, overlooked—between the end of World War II and the post-1978 period, following the assassination of DC President Aldo Moro—with the results that I will try to

explain. In the 1980s, Italian politics split into two blocs: a right wing, close to Sturzo, and a left wing that looked to Dossetti but was incapable of understanding Dossetti’s full revolutionary message.

Both factions, which alternated in government over the past thirty years, have been incapable of understanding Italy’s national needs and have led us through a steady worsening of things.

The difference between Sturzo and Dossetti will be evident in the following treatment and can only be solved with what I call the “LaRouche solution,”

without which we will either be forced to deny the social functions of the state as described in the Italian Constitution—which broke with both the liberal and dictatorial traditions—or to accept a globalism with a beautiful theological basis but a very bad political perspective.

I will proceed in an orderly fashion to be clearly understood. This is not easy, but it is necessary, to establish whether Catholics can push their own view of economic questions, which is anti-free market and anti-degrowth—not mistaking Saint Francis for the Prince of Wales—as well as socially Christian.

1. When Benito Mussolini took power in 1922 thanks to the support, among others, of the crown, De Gasperi backed him because he thought Mussolini could help to re-establish the state of law that was being eroded in the four years following the end of World War I. Sturzo, instead, was very hostile from the beginning, because he saw in Mussolini’s “radical socialism” an effort to put the state—the big Leviathan—and state authority, over everything. Fascism soon dropped its act, with the assassination of socialist deputy Giacomo Matteotti in 1924. Things became clear. Luigi Sturzo,

Mussolini's enemy number one, had to flee into exile and his relationship with De Gasperi—who remained in Italy and found protection in the Vatican—was never repaired.

2. At the end of World War II, a referendum established the Republic as the form of state and introduced an autonomous statute for Sicily as a region in the new state. Sturzo, a Sicilian, was very enthusiastic for the latter solution, which would neutralize the strong separatist movement.

### **The Role of the State**

3. Sturzo, however, was very critical of the contents of the Constitution, drafted one year later, despite the fact that its contents, strongly influenced by Dossetti, were not much different from the contents of the very Sicilian statutes Sturzo had approved.

Sturzo's opposition was due to two related reasons: Dossetti's work was aimed, in dialogue with the other political forces that had played determining roles in the antifascist struggle, to change the profile of government to a more active role, committing the new-born Republic to a whole series of fronts (social, business, anti-war, and educational among others), which Sturzo saw as being the prerogative of the private sector and families first, of local authorities second, and only lastly that of the State, based on the "subsidiarity" principle often presented in Papal Encyclicals.

Dossetti and the 1948 Constitution turned this approach upside down, acknowledging that government must provide for responding to the needs of the people and society as a priority. The second reason lay in the continuity of the role of the state under fascism—or better, with the central role of state intervention in the economy—which was eventually represented in the *Cronache Sociali* [a journal of sociology and politics] group by such figures as DC leader Amintore Fanfani and economist Federico Caffé.

State conglomerates and agencies including IRI (Institute for Industrial Reconstruction), Eni (National Hydrocarbons Authority), Cassa per il Mezzogiorno (Fund for the South), and others, in the spirit of the culture established in the 1930s by U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt, could not accept the liberal economic approach, according to which the market will solve all economic problems.

The 1930s marked a shift to an anti-free market direction because in that decade of continuous and seri-

ous economic crisis it became clear that the free market not only did not solve the problems but was itself the cause of problems.

This lesson was totally forgotten several decades later, and the free market appeared to be the solution to issues that had emerged during post-war development. Thus, free-market policies, starting in the 1980s, dealt with problems determined by the growth of international markets by killing growth!

4. Thus, after the end of World War, II Sturzo held to his free-market and autonomist positions, even criticizing—as we have seen—the 1947 Constitution, which had inspired the 1948 "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" promoted by Eleanor Roosevelt.

5. Eventually, Dossetti made a decisive contribution to the Vatican II Ecumenical Council, in which Catholicism as a religion opened up not only to the "Peoples of the Book," but to all other Confessions as well, thus generating another split, which ultimately produced two Popes: one unconditionally in favor of anyone claiming to be against Mammon, and pro-environment; and another one who refers to a tradition that is open to social issues but at the same time emphasizes theological distinctions among religions.

Concerning the latter, it was Pope Benedict XVI's speech in Regensburg that unleashed condemnations by real or alleged progressives against him.

### **Free-Marketeers Dismantle Bretton Woods Agreements**

6. With the return of free-market policies in the United States and Europe at the end of the 1970s—especially the Tokyo G7 in 1979, which dismantled the last bulwark of the 1944 Bretton Woods agreements that had ensured 35 years of extraordinary economic and political development—the split between Sturzo (already dead) and Dossetti (now only an outsider) became even more serious.

The left failed to implement Dossetti's teachings, which are embedded in the Constitution, and could have been applied once financial means were available in the 1970. The right wing misused Sturzo's liberal and subsidiarist approach to dismantle the policy of universal welfare for what was called residual welfare (aid for the poor), and abandon the national industrial strategy, which had made Italy great, thus abandoning any useful role of government in the economy, in research and development, and in infrastructural progress.

7. However, Dossetti was in favor of overcoming the nation-state in the name of perspective ecumenism. The latter was based on solid theological principles, albeit principles not shared by everyone in the Catholic world. This approach risked being part of the project to dismantle national states pushed by big corporations and by the centers of financial power.

In this, the faction on the left that had not accepted free-market theories and had remained consistent with the social values of the workers' movement, did not understand that defending an intact nation-state, serving the general interests and not the multinationals, represented a major bulwark against injustices and for responsible development.

### **Catholics Divided**

8. After the assassination of Moro, Italian politics seemed to cease understanding and shaping changes, and instead bent to the "Northern Wind," as was said forty years ago, going back to failed free-market policies.

The Catholic world, no longer able to express itself as a political force in line with Italian traditions, different from the more conservative forces in other European countries, became more and more divided and unimportant, incapable of choosing between Sturzo's anti-statist and Dossetti's globalist views. Some Encyclicals and some Popes defended the principles of the "Church Social Doctrine," but then, only in the context of free-market economists, indifferent to Evangelical principles.

It was with this background, in considering these strategies, that I was introduced to Lyndon LaRouche. A major collaboration and a friendship ensued, involving my father and my entire family. However, the Catholic world remained split between the incarnation of the evangelical message in economic policy and the homage to a free-market approach that could offer only archaic anti-communism.

### **The 'LaRouche Solution'**

9. We come, therefore, to the "LaRouche Solution," consisting of combining economic development perspectives, in which the state plays a major and appropriate role, but without provoking that aggressive and racist nationalism which stands accused of having led to world wars.

In fact, Lyndon LaRouche's stance stems from the

1648 Treaty of Westphalia: All states are sovereign (*superiorem non reconoscentes*) and, this is the point: all agree to respect each other's sovereignty.

In other terms, once each state has defined its national sovereignty, it wants the same situation for its neighbor: to neither subvert nor vanquish the other state, based on a putative superiority.

Wars occur when a very large growth of economic capacities combines with a culture of superiority of one nation over another; if the economic policy is not achievement-oriented but is instead based on some superiority, those capacities are unleashed against neighbors, often in a military fashion.

The USA made a mistake after World War I, when it imposed a debt on Germany, unleashing the dynamic of frustrated economic development and feelings of revenge, which produced Nazism (or in Italy, the so-called *vittoria mutilata* (crippled victory)—that created a basis for fascism to develop.

The differences in the United States' behavior towards Germany, Japan, and Italy after World War II were therefore the foundation of the current *Pax Europea*. But the weakening of Mediterranean states in the European Union (where northern racism towards the South prevails) has provoked an insufficient development of Southern economic capacity, with imbalances within the EU itself.

Thus, the "LaRouche solution" means opposing the plans of the globalist multinationals and financial powers, but without pushing chauvinism and conflict; on the contrary, healthy competition among sovereign nations, which respect each other, provides the basis for international agreements on major issues such as energy; international and intercontinental infrastructure; and scientific and technological research.

Thus, combining the democratic strength of nations with a sense of a proud fatherland, with respect for other nations, and with growth that acts responsibly (towards nature), while expressing the potential of each country—peace among nations then rises to be not merely a finality, but, above all, a tool of international relations based on mutual respect and adequate development for everyone.

It is the "win-win" model, which has begun to prevail over the obsolete *mors tua vita mea* [your death is my life] and brought comfort to the last period of Lyndon LaRouche's earthly life.