
Commentary: Mariapia Garavaglia

An economic policy to defend families

The Hon. Mariapia Garavaglia, from Milan, was elected to the Italian Parliament in the 8th and 9th legislatures. She chairs the Health Commission of the Christian Democratic Party in the House of Deputies, and is in charge of health for the national party.

The Italian Constitution is centered on a solidarist conception of personal and economic relations. According to the Constitution, it is "the task of the Republic to remove the obstacles within the social and economic order which would, in fact, limit the liberty and equality of citizens, impede the full development of individuals, and the effective participation of every working member of society in the political, economic, and social life of the country." The family "and particularly large families" are the intermediate social structure which the State has to support, according to Article 31 of the Constitution, "with economic and other measures."

Such a cultural orientation is evidently premised also on a political, economic, financial, and fiscal context which is still present in a country, Italy, which by tradition and political choice is located in the Western world, and intersects also the most extreme liberalist theory. The contradictions and imbalances created by these two different conceptions, the constitutional and the liberalist one, can better be seen in the case of family savings.

For some years there has been in Italy a lively debate on income taxes, over the so-called *cumulo dei redditi*, which means that not the individual income is taxed, but the accumulated income of all family members, and also over to the "minimum income" required for living. The Commission for Family Problems, formed within the Ministry of Labor, and the Commission on Poverty, formed by the premier's office—both chaired by Prof. E. Gorrieri—have stressed the deep imbalances deriving from the application of different methods used in analyzing family income. The family with one wage earner and two members, is quite different from the family which has several wage earners and many members; further, income would be calculated quite differently if, besides wages, one figured in specific kinds of support, such as unemployment allowances, disability pensions, etc.



The author in front of the Italian Parliament in Rome.

The collapse of the Stock Exchange, which was certainly foreseeable (the Treasury Ministry had many times cautioned prudence), has indeed impoverished family savings. This has also changed the political profile of social stratification, and this is not insignificant for certain political parties, whose existence is not premised on ideals, and who place their bets on the fortunes of emerging classes. The illusion of easy money derives from the logic of consumerism, rather than from allocating reserves for structural reforms, the only way that a development plan could be sustained which is linked to the rate of employment and the redefinition of those goods and public services (which are personal services). The tendency to liberalize and deregulate services is instead destroying them, feeding the inflationary spiral, and reinforcing modes of behavior which are so contrary to moral and economic rigor: drug traffic, contraband, etc.

Not by coincidence, the mafias have at their disposal enormous masses of capital, which they use solely in their own economic interests, to destabilize many countries (e.g., various countries of Latin America), masses of capital capable of altering the legal markets in every sector, and heavily influencing also the ordered organization of the labor force.

The family is sustained by the Good: not only moral, but also economic. It is not for nothing that in his Encyclical *Laborem Excercens*—truly a manual of conduct and not merely indications of abstract principles—Pope John Paul II, from the standpoint of the affirmation that labor is *for* man, asks that the family be the school of full solidarity, precisely in the sense that every member, according to his

situation (there is an ongoing thorough reevaluation also in the case of women), collaborates for the general good.

If the monetary maneuvers are attuned to shaping an effective structural development, it would be possible to respond also to the call coming from "third and fourth" countries. In his recent trip to Italy, the President of Peru, Alan García, made a request which has also come from government officials of many other countries that partake of the cultural bond of aiding and promoting human development, to be able to deal as a partner with the rich countries. Otherwise, the conflicts which are of a class nature inside a country, become the dominant forces in the relations between nations.

What has all this to do with family savings? One must consider the origins of the problem, because it is clear that social security alone does not autonomously allow for the recovery of the capacity of the family. In the Financial Law of 1987, the Italian counterpart to the Gramm-Rudman bill, there is a clause dedicated to the need to "support the family"; the dominant idea is to guarantee the intervention of the State by way of services and transfers to families that are truly in difficulty, avoiding the deregulation of services.

The family capable of spending an income without fiscal tangles, allocated to equal services for all, becomes an economic agent in truth as interpreted by the Constitution.

Interview: Edward E. Kennedy

Federal food curbs: unconstitutional

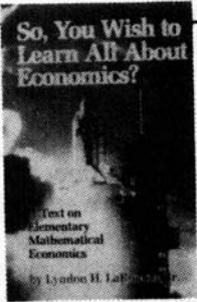
Both the current farm law, and opposition measures recently proposed by members of Congress, are based on the false premise that the root cause of the farm income collapse is the "overproduction" of food. A tireless fighter against this misconception is Edward E. Kennedy, a leading agriculture policy maker in the 1920s and 1930s, who has exposed the role of the Federal Reserve Board in undermining farm prices and farm credit. Kennedy served as national secretary and legislative director of the National Farmers Union, research director for the United Mine Workers, probate judge in Maryland, and many other leadership positions. In 1983, he released his book The Fed and the Farmer. Today, at 92, he is actively engaged in formulating emergency agriculture policies, and gave this interview on Oct. 21 to agriculture editor Marcia Merry.

EIR: In the 1930s, you fought laws requiring farmers to destroy food. From your experience as a farmer and farm leader, how did these orders affect farmers?

Kennedy: Back in the 1930s, the government was paying farmers to destroy 6 million pigs, to shoot every 10th dairy cow, to veal all the heifer calves, to plow under every third row of cotton, and plow under a certain percentage of the crops that were in the ground, like corn and wheat. For example, farmers were ordered to plow under a third of the wheat that was already growing out of the ground, which is the food and the substance of life itself.

Of course I contended, at that time I was secretary for the National Farmers Union, that the government of the United States was enforcing and paying for *the abortion of mother nature*. And this was the beginning of the Supreme Court decision. Actually there was no physical connection, except that they were testing whether or not the farmers would stand for destroying the little pigs that had been farrowed, the wheat that had been planted, the corn that had been planted, the cotton that had been planted, which was a violation of everything that a farmer believed in and that he had dedicated his life to do, that is, to create growth, to bring forth the fruits of the earth.

We got Congress to repeal the Joint Resolution No. 60 [the food destruction orders], and when we went to Kansas and got into federal court, the Department of Agriculture at



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