One of the reasons people of the South were resistant to unification and lacking trust in the Piedmontese government was the imposition of a centralized Piedmontese administration when it had appeared—in part, thanks to this proclamation—that there would be some level of regional autonomy.


**THE CRISIS IN ITALY.; Proclamation of Victor Emanuel. TO THE PEOPLE OF SOUTHERN ITALY.**

Front page of New York Times, Nov. 1, 1860

At a solemn moment for the national history and for the destinies of the country I address my word to you, people of Southern Italy, who, having in my name changed the State, send me deputations of every class of citizens, magistrates and representatives of your municipal bodies, asking to be restored to order, blessed with freedom, and united with my kingdom. I will tell you by what thought I am guided, and what is my consciousness of the duties which a man placed by Providence on an Italian throne ought to fulfill.

I ascended the throne after a great national calamity. My father gave me a lofty example by abdicating the crown to save his own dignity and the freedom of his people. CHARLES ALBERT fell sword in hand, and died in exile. His death associated more and more the destinies of my family with those of the Italian people, who for so many centuries have given to all foreign lands the bones of their exiles as a pledge for restoring the inheritance of every nation placed by God within the same boundaries, and joined together by the bond of a common language. I educated myself by that example, and the memory of my father was my guardian star. I could never hesitate in my choice between a crown and the word I had given. I strengthened freedom in an epoch not very favorable to freedom, and I wished that, as it developed itself, it should take root in the manners of the people, for I could never harbor any jealousy or suspicion of what was dear to my people. By preserving freedom in Piedmont I religiously respected the heritage which the prophetic mind of my august father had bequeathed to all Italians. By representative franchise, by popular education, by the freedom of trade and industry, I endeavored to increase the well-being of my people. I wished that the Catholic religion should be respected, but also that every man should be free in the sanctuary of his own condition; and, by strengthening civil authority, I openly resisted that obstinate and scheming faction which boasts to be the only friend and guardian of the Throne, but which aims at ruling in the name of Kings, and placed between the Sovereign and the people the barrier of its intolerant passions.

This system of Government could not be without effect on the rest of Italy. The concord between the Sovereign and the people in the purpose of national independence and of civil and political liberty, the Parliamentary tribune and the free Press, and the army, which had preserved its military traditions under the tri-color, raised Piedmont to the rank of standard-bearer and arm of Italy. The strength of my monarchy was not the result of the arts of a clandestine policy, but of the open influence of ideas and of public opinion. I was thus enabled to maintain in that part of the Italian people which was united under my sceptre the notion of a national leadership, (egemonia,) whence was to spring the concordant harmony of the severed provinces in one single nation.

Italy was able to understand my conception when she beheld my soldiers sent into the fields of the Crimea beside the troops of the two great Western Powers. I wished thereby to acquire for Italy the right of participating in all acts concerning the interests of Europe. At the Congress of Paris my Ambassadors were able to speak for the first time to Europe of your sufferings. It became clear to all men how the preponderance of Austria in Italy was injurious to the balance of power in Europe, and what dangers beset the independence and freedom of Europe so long as the rest of the Peninsula was subject to foreign influence.
My magnanimous ally, the Emperor NAPOLEON III., felt that the Italian cause was worthy of the great nation he rules. A righteous war inaugurated the new destinies of our country. The Italian soldiers fought nobly beside the unconquered legions of France. The volunteers hastening from all Italian provinces, from all Italian families, under the Cross of Savoy, showed that all Italy had invested me with the right of speaking and fighting in her name. Policy put an end to the war, but not to its effects, which went on with their development, following the unswerving logic of events and of popular movement.

Had I been actuated by that ambition which is ascribed to my family by those who do not consider the nature of the times, I could have been satisfied with the acquisition of Lombardy; but I had shed the blood of my soldiers, not for myself, but for Italy. I had called the Italians to arms. Several Italian provinces had changed their form of government to join in the war of independence -- a war opposed by their Princes. After the peace of Villafranca those provinces asked my protection against the threatened restoration of their former Governments. If the events of Central Italy were the consequence of the war to which we had called the people, if the system of foreign intervention was for ever to be banished from Italy, I had a duty to recognized, and to uphold the right of those people legally and freely to utter their vote. I withdrew my Government -- they made an orderly Government; I withdrew my troops -- they organized regular forces, and, vying with each other in unanimity and civil virtues, they rose to so high a reputation and strength, that nothing but the overbearing violence of foreign arms could have subdued them. Thanks to the wisdom of the Central Italian people, the monarchical idea constantly gained strength, and monarchy gave a moral guidance to that peaceful popular movement. Thus did Italy rise in the estimation of civilized nations, and it became clear to all Europe that the Italians were fit for self-government.

When I accepted the annexation I knew not what European difficulties I was about to meet; but I could not break the word I had given to the Italians in my war proclamation. Those who would charge me with imprudence should calmly consider what would become of Italy on the day in which monarchy should appear powerless to satisfy the want of a national reconstitution. The annexation did not change the substance of the national movement, but it assumed new forms. By accepting from the popular right those fine and noble provinces, I must loyally recognize the application of that principle, nor could I measure it by the rule of my private feelings and interests. In support of that principle, I, for the good of Italy, made the sacrifice which cost my heart the dearest; I renounced two most noble provinces of the kingdom of my ancestors.

I have always given those Italian Princes who wished to be my enemies sincere counsels, resolving, however, that if those counsels were vain, I would meet the danger to which their blindness would have exposed the throne by accepting the will of Italy. It was in vain that I offered to the Grand Duke of Tuscany alliance before the war; in vain that, after the peace, I offered the High Pontiff, in whom I venerate the head of the religion of my fathers and of my people, to take upon myself the vicarship of Umbria and the Marches. It was evident that if those Provinces, which were only restrained by the arms of foreign hirelings, did not obtain the security of that civilized government which I proposed, they would sooner or later break into revolution. Neither will I recall the counsels given for many years by the Powers to King FERDINAND of Naples. The judgement which was pronounced against his Government at the Paris Congress naturally prepared the people for a change, if the outcry of public opinion and the efforts of diplomacy proved to be of no avail. I offered the young successor of that King an alliance for the war of independence. But there also I found souls closed against all Italian feelings, minds darkened by passion and obstinacy. It was natural that the events in Northern and Central Italy should arouse men's minds in the South. In Sicily the excitement broke out into open insurrection. A fight began for freedom in Sicily, when a brave warrior, devoted to Italy and to me -- Gen. GARIBALDI -- sailed to its aid. They were Italians. Could I, ought I, to have prevented them? The fall of the Government of Naples strengthened in my heart the conviction that Kings and Governments should build their thrones on the love and esteem of the people. The new Government in the Two Sicilies was inaugurated in my name. But some of its acts caused apprehension lest it should not in every respect well interpret that policy which is represented by my name. It was feared throughout Italy that under the shade of a glorious popularity, of a long-tried honesty, a faction should muster which was ready to sacrifice the forthcoming triumph of the national cause to the chimeras of its ambitious fanaticism. All Italians turned to me, that I might avert this danger. It was my duty to do it, because in the present emergency it would be no moderation, no wisdom, but weakness and imprudence, not to take with a strong hand the direction of that national movement, for
which I am responsible before Europe. I have sent my soldiers into the Marches and Umbria, and scattered that ill-sorted mob of people of all nations and tongues which had gathered there as a new, strange phase of foreign intervention, and the worst of all. I have proclaimed Italy for the Italians; and will never allow Italy to become the nest of cosmopolitan sects, assembling there to hatch reactionary plots, or to further the objects of universal demagogy.

People of Southern Italy! -- My troops march into your country to strengthen public order. I do not come to impose my will upon you, but to see that yours is respected. You will be called freely to manifest it. May the vote you will deposit in the urn be inspired by that Providence which protects a righteous cause! Whatever may be the course of events, I tranquilly await the judgment of civilized Europe, because I am convinced that I have fulfilled my duties as a King and an Italian. My policy may not, perhaps, be useless to reconcile in Europe the progress of the people with the stability of monarchies. I know that in Italy I close the era of revolutions.

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

FARINI.

Given in Ancona, this 9th of October, 1860.