

existing infrastructures on both shores.

Prudent projections of the traffic elaborated in 1992, estimate that from the date of the bridge's opening, there will be 5 million cars, 1.7 million commercial vehicles, 800,000 passenger and freight rail cars, per year.

If you factor in the same toll rates as those currently levied by the other large European bridges (and which are not much different from those today charged by the ferry service), and if you take into account the substantial sum today spent for ferrying trains, and then look at the financial analysis that has been developed, it indicates that the bridge could, at least in large part, finance itself.

In other words, the bridge is not only demonstrably a fundamental work for the development of the country, and hence of high economic and social return, but also an initiative capable of attracting and remunerating significant private capital, Italian and foreign.

The bridge as an element of national cohesion, carrying Europe into the heart of the Mediterranean, is a fundamental link of the north-south axis of the industrialized countries to those emerging in Africa, which will rationalize what has already been achieved, promote development, and bring with it a high standard of living and a higher quality of life for people.

## Return to national infrastructure planning

by Alberto Servidio

*Alberto Servidio, esq., is the former director of the Cassa del Mezzogiorno, the state development fund for financing and planning the development of southern Italy, known as the Mezzogiorno. The following remarks to the EIR-Italian Solidarity Movement conference in Rome, on April 10, have been translated from Italian. Subheads have been added.*

When faced with the recent polemics on the "social state," the question arises, why is this concept now identified with a policy of "transfer," instead of a policy of development?

Even if the redistribution of produced wealth is necessary for the solidarity which marks progress and cohesion within society, it cannot constitute an "independent variable," because it is actually a function of the capacity of the economic system to produce wealth.

It is up to policymakers to adopt the decisions which allow a system to combine development and redistribution in such a way that the latter is not detrimental to the former.

The instruments of public action—once the illusory utopias of rigid and centralized planning have faded away—are the classic instruments of the economies founded on pluralism and the market: revenue, currency, and actions directed at creating and guaranteeing favorable conditions for the best and most harmonic development possible.

But it is not always possible to use these instruments in an undifferentiated manner, in a single national situation.

### The policy of 'extraordinary intervention'

The reality of the Italian situation, which is characterized by a persistent dualism deriving from a long historic and geographic isolation of the peninsular area of the country from its insular area, demonstrates this.

Therefore, making market access equitable—a situation also postulated by the regulation of competition by the European Common Market, which assumes equal starting conditions—has required, and continues to require, a differentiated national economic policy.

The fact that this task is assigned to a national policy, is not accidental, because interventions on a regional scale remain insufficient, since the problem is multi-regional, and thus the solutions must be supra-regional.

This was very clear in the immediate postwar government

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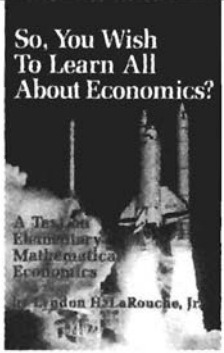
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*“Re-launching an infrastructure policy at every level appears to be one of the most efficient means to create and maintain the conditions of developing the real economy, and a harmonious diffusion of wealth and participation in progress,” said Alberto Servidio. Here, from left: translator, Lyndon LaRouche, Helga Zepp LaRouche, and Alberto Servidio.*

of [Alcide] De Gaspari, whose view of the question was based on an analysis to which the economist Pasquale Saraceno made a significant contribution: Initially, reconstruction, and, later, development, were generally promoted by intervening on the side of demand, but they were specifically promoted in the less-developed part of the country, by intervening on supply.

Thus, the policy of “extraordinary intervention” for the Mezzogiorno was born, with the intention of creating ideal conditions for development (hydro-geological projects, water reclamation and land transformations, water supply, communications infrastructure), and by encouraging productive investments.

This policy did not mean “hand-outs,” since it aimed to bring the Mezzogiorno to a situation of self-determination, through the increase in the area’s fixed social capital, and the stimulation of its entrepreneurial capability.

Objectively, the effects of the policy were remarkable, for the period in which the original concept of the intervention was maintained.

Here we should be clear.

It was not conceivable that the extraordinary intervention policy could eliminate the gap between the north and the south in just 20 years, since the opportunity for development would be exploited—as, in fact, it was—more widely and quickly in the more developed and industrialized areas. But without the extraordinary intervention, the gap would have become even wider. On the contrary, though, until the beginning of

the 1970s, the south had grown at the same rate as the country as a whole. It is true that the development gap still existed, but on a different base, which indicated significant progress in the south in absolute terms.

The first deviation from the extraordinary intervention policy came in the 1970s. But a more marked abandonment of the policy came in the 1980s, when the extraordinary intervention planning lost its territorial dimension, and, with this, the strategic aspect of its objectives and actions, and fell into a localist fragmentation, with the dissipation of resources as a consequence. This provoked resentment and polemics on the part of the more advanced areas of the country, putting the spirit of unity in jeopardy.

The regionalization of the intervention also provoked a large non-use (and the risk of loss) of European Community aid, as well as inattention to completing programs which involved wider-scale infrastructure projects.

This degeneration of the policy damaged the whole country, since the extraordinary interventions in the Mezzogiorno had also brought significant benefits to the industries of the north, in terms of supply, sales and larger markets, in addition to the special aid for programs to expand production in the southern areas (capital grants, special credits, services, tax incentives).

### **Recover the unity of planning policy**

In the light of these facts, there seems to be no alternative to recovering the unity of the planning policy for the develop-

ment of the Mezzogiorno, to once again give the intervention policy and the European Community aid a strategic aspect, inasmuch as the "region" in question is the Mezzogiorno as a whole, and not its existing regional partitions, entities which could, in any case, complete the projects that are currently under their direction.

There is no sense in becoming exasperated with bonds and divisions created by the constitutional ordering of the nation. The fact that these divisions may not be adequate with respect to the territorial dimension of the problems, does not mean that the solutions should be lacking, but that the organizational rules, which remain mere instruments with respect to national needs, should be made adequate.

This does not necessarily mean the reestablishment of past policies. If taking up past battles by the same name evokes bad memories for some people, then they should put their imagination to work in dealing with the objective dimensions of the problems.

### **Complete the water plan**

A clear and obvious example of a problem to deal with, is the completion of the water plan, which would guarantee a quantity of this fundamental resource adequate for the productive and civil development of the Mezzogiorno.

In southern Italy, water resources accumulate in the large masses of limestone of the region's internal mountainous ridge, and the area lacks an adequate system of rivers which would provide natural delivery of water supplies to the coastal plains, where the productive activity and the residential areas are concentrated.

Since there is a natural lack of these channels, it is imperative that we intervene with artificial works, to collect the water where possible, and transport it where it is needed.

The Cassa del Mezzogiorno, operating as a government authority in this field, financed, planned, and in large part elaborated an impressive system of water plans, which is still waiting to be completed and entrusted to industrial management, with the combined aim of avoiding a situation in which many investments remain without actual economic effect, and ensuring an efficient and optimal use of those resources.

The Cassa was also able to plan these systems with the entire southern territory in mind, because no obstacles were found the best technical solutions, based on the geo-morphological situation, the locations with the most recoverable water, and the distribution of water needs in the territory.

The regionalization of the later activities of the Cassa destroyed the unity of the inter-regional systems, and the functional unity of the strongly interconnected systems in the continental Mezzogiorno. Revitalizing the situation necessitates recourse to an authority which has competence in this field, which is absolutely necessary in order to balance the water budget.

Such a criterion also asserts itself more generally in terms

of the reorganization of water services, since the recent legislative reform has taken as its foundation the hydrographic basin defined by the law governing protection of the environment. That definition is based on rivers, and it is valid only for water supplies based on natural waterways. Where such natural waterways are insufficient or lacking, which is the case in the entire part of the country south of the Ligurian-Tuscan-Emilian level of the Appennines, one must create some type of authority to also manage the artificial water systems.

This means that, in order to plan the use of water resources, the national territory must be divided into large districts which are determined so that it is possible to meet the water needs in each one; which means that, in the areas where the recoverability of the resource is inversely proportional to the distribution of the need for it, we must include in that district, all of the areas where it is possible to recover and collect water sufficient for the needs of the area.

An authority of this type should have the power not only to plan interventions, but also to set rates for the cost of local distribution.

This means entrusting to self-financing (through fees and rates) the covering of maintenance and operating costs, and also a certain portion of the depreciation of the plants. These costs would represent the part of the project which is calculated to exceed the general public interest, according to the criterion (but not necessarily the measurement) of roadway concessions.

### **Other infrastructure projects**

Something analogous can be done for new projects, depending on the concession of construction and management.

This is not limited to water systems, but can be extended to other types of infrastructure, such as intermodality, the upgrading of underutilized transport hubs, tourist centers, the creation of research centers, and without, of course, leaving out the revitalizing of the energy sector, which was tragically interrupted by the referendum on nuclear energy.

Naturally, even considering forms of self-financing and quantities of private capital, a certain amount of public financing is still necessary, which cannot consist only of European Community appropriations. And thus, the question comes back to our point of departure: an adjustment of the relation between "transfers" and investments in public spending, to give an impetus to development, and also the real progress of society, which is not only based on the redistribution of wealth, but on concentration on producing wealth.

In this light, relaunching an infrastructure policy at every level appears to be one of the most efficient means to create and maintain the conditions of developing the real economy, and a harmonious diffusion of wealth and participation in progress. This is even more important in a situation marked by imbalances and inequalities, such as in Italy, if solidarity is still to be of value to the national community.