

American Relief for Italy, Inc.



Boys' Republic of Italy, Inc.

*1944 - 1951*

*Boys Town of Italy, Inc.*

*St. Antonio  
Rivista  
Repubblica dei  
Ragazzi*

American Relief for Italy, Inc.

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A.R.I., Inc.

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Boys' Republic of Italy, Inc.

29 BROADWAY, NEW YORK 6, N. Y.

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MYRON C. TAYLOR

## In Review

# M Y R O N C . T A Y L O R

*Chairman, Board of Directors, American Relief for Italy, Inc.,  
ARI, Inc., Boys' Republic of Italy, Inc.*

Searching my thoughts on the accomplishments of three successive agencies organized since 1944 to bring moral and material relief to the most needy people of Italy, I feel the purposes established at the very beginning of this voluntary program have more than been achieved.

On my return from a country in the throes of war in 1944, I felt it my duty to initiate a program of voluntary relief by Americans for Italy. Italy was about to be liberated and her people would immediately face the tragedies of poverty, disease and great hunger.

Our President was acutely aware of the problems which would arise in Italy with the cessation of war — followed by liberation — problems which not only were the result of physical destruction and radical dislocation of its population and economy, but also an integral part of the struggle to establish a new form of government. The immediate program, as we saw it, was to form an organization here in America which could immediately bring some measure of relief and supplement our government's assistance to the millions of men, women and children whose hands would reach out toward us.

American Relief for Italy, Inc., from 1944 to 1947—ARI, Inc., from 1947 to 1949 —and the Boys' Republic of Italy, Inc., from 1949 to October, 1951, each tried to meet the emergencies prevailing at the time of their separate organization. American Relief for Italy, Inc., and ARI, Inc., had various projects of general relief which brought from America millions of pounds of much needed food, clothing and medicine. When the need for these emergency considerations had been met by the various Agencies working in Italy, the Boys' Republic of Italy, Inc., was formed with the specific purpose of rehabilitating the homeless and orphaned street boys.

All of America was part of this program. No offer of help was turned away. In the pages that follow you will find a more graphic presentation of what has been accomplished. I should like to express to all, and very especially to Judge Juvenal Marchisio, who have made this record of achievement possible, my heartfelt thanks. Thousands of lives were saved by this help so abundantly given, and I am pleased to share with you the satisfaction of a job well done.

It is my feeling that our assistance, given with faith in Italy's future, helped to maintain the dignity of a nation in its struggle to reestablish itself. Our purposes were founded in the age-old concept, nurtured in the traditions of American democracy, that each man's well-being is everyone's concern. The problems were a challenge to the conscience of our country. It was for us to preserve the font of our civilization, and give back to Italy a part of America, as a small token of our gratitude for the culture she so generously gave to our world.

## In Acknowledgement

# JUDGE JUVENAL MARCHISIO

*President, American Relief for Italy, Inc.,  
ARI, Inc., Boys' Republic of Italy, Inc.*

In 1944, more than one half of Italy's population was in urgent want. Millions of men, women and children were homeless and destitute; cities and countryside had been laid waste; homes were piles of brick and rubble; fields destroyed and still mined; railroads practically non-existent; harbors no longer open for commerce. This, briefly, was the picture—now so well-known—of a country emerging from war and still a battleground.

Myron C. Taylor, a witness with a full realization of the tragedy unfolding before his eyes, brought home to America the bitter truth that without supplemental voluntary assistance thousands of Italians would perish. Under his leadership and careful guidance grew the three successive Agencies which undertook to provide that aid so necessary to save lives, to relieve suffering, to heal and to rehabilitate.

Through the years 1944 to 1951—years of great economic dislocation and political crisis, this help continued to flow to Italy. Its continuance was made possible only through the generosity of people of all faiths in America who gave so liberally that the Italian people might have a new chance in life.

When many thought the work was done, that the Italian people had been saved from the brink of starvation, disease and death by the food and medicines forwarded by the American people—that families had been reunited, homes rebuilt, Mr. Taylor could not forget the many children still abandoned and living in the streets.

And so, the work continued, ever gaining new supporters. In the Boys' Towns established in various sections of Italy, these street boys found a refuge of affection and security in what had only been a bewilderingly cold and hostile world.

A great measure of the success of our programs was due in large part to the loyal and wholehearted efforts of Dominic J. Marcello, Executive Vice-President of ARI, Inc., and presently Executive Officer of the Italian Mission of E.C.A.; to Piero Bonelli; and to Rosalie Rubino who, from the inception, served as Assistant Director of American Relief for Italy, Inc., and ARI, Inc., and as Executive Vice-President of the Boys' Republic of Italy, Inc., I should like also to pay tribute at this time to each and every member of the staff of the three organizations without whose invaluable aid this work could not have been done. Nor would it be possible not to express appreciation to Ing. Giovanni Battista Vicentini, the Director General of ENDSI and Dr. Giovanni Battista Canaperia, Director General of our medical program who contributed so much to the success of the program in Italy.

It is impossible to cite by name, the thousands upon thousands of friends who gave so unstintingly of their time, effort and worldly goods so that our various projects could continue—but to each and every American who made his contribution goes the gratitude of the sixteen million people to whom his contribution meant renewed hope in a new life.



# HISTORY

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In the recent past, mankind, having been through the nightmare of a five-year war, with murder and destruction rampant, inherited all the misery left in its wake—hunger, pain and destitution. A ruined economy and a scorched countryside in many lands could no longer furnish the barest essentials for maintaining life. This was a challenge to man's conscience.

One of the greatest humanitarians of all time, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, aware of the suffering and need, became the architect of widespread programs for relief. He summoned others who, like himself, were anxious to lend their talents in the service of humanity. Among them was the Honorable Myron C. Taylor, the President's Personal Representative to His Holiness Pope Pius XII and a renowned industrialist and philanthropist.

In view of Mr. Taylor's thorough understanding of Italy's problems through long residence there, his experience and his personal contacts with Italian leaders, he was entrusted with the task of organizing a comprehensive program for the relief of that country's suffering masses.

It was a formidable undertaking. Italy was one of the most thoroughly devastated of war-stricken countries. Nearly two-thirds of the population, or twenty-seven million people, were in desperate want. Five million were homeless, an equal number were in danger of immediate death from starvation, many millions more faced the torture of cold and disease with ragged, thinly-clad bodies—hundreds of thousands of war-maimed or sick lay in partially destroyed hospitals without medicines or other aid, and war orphaned youngsters roamed the streets by the thousands, reduced to the necessity of living by the law of the jungle—survival of the fittest.

Moreover, Italian cities lay in ruins as a result of battle, factories, and other industrial plants were either destroyed or plundered by the retreating enemy, and the country's economy was crippled. The task of eliminating the enemy from the northern region of the peninsula still remained and the provisional Italian government was directing its efforts and depleted resources toward this goal in cooperation with the Allied armies.

With the liberation of all Italy, the newly-formed Italian coalition regime, while facing the early trials and errors of unaccustomed Democracy, was grappling with the problems of a war-torn nation beset by a dearth of materials and necessities.

This, then, was the situation confronting Mr. Taylor when he was called to the White House in the early spring of 1944 and given the assignment to add to government assistance in Italy by alleviating suffering and need with voluntary supplemental aid until such time as the Italian people could find themselves on the road to recovery.

The history of accomplishments in this respect is told in the ensuing pages and serves as the recorded testimony of the indefatigable efforts and guiding genius of both Mr. Taylor and of Judge Juvenal Marchisio, who, as President of American Relief for Italy, Inc., brought energetic support and devotion to a worthy, humanitarian cause.

## *Organization*

American Relief for Italy, Inc., was organized on the 10th of April, 1944. It was the first private agency for Italian relief to come into existence during World War II at the time of the partial liberation of Italy. The progress of the Allied armies on Italian soil and the consequent looting and scorched earth policy of the retreating armies made imperative the alleviation of suffering and want afflicting the Italian people.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt who, in many public pronouncements, had declared that all peoples would be guaranteed the Four Freedoms, including freedom from want, kept faith with the first liberated country—Italy. At his request, Mr. Myron Taylor, the President's Personal Representative to Pope Pius XII, undertook the task of organizing American Relief for Italy. Mr. Roosevelt, in conceiving this humanitarian work, was also thinking of the peace and of the role that Italy was to play in the future plans for world harmony. In a public statement he stated:

“This relief will be an investment for the future—an investment that will pay dividends . . . Italy should go on as a great mother nation, contributing to the culture and progress of the good-will of all mankind . . . We want and expect the help of the future Italy toward lasting peace.”

Prior to the incorporation of American Relief for Italy in April 1944, under the laws of the State of New York, four other prominent Americans were named as trustees in addi-

tion to Mr. Taylor. They were: Major-General John H. Hildring, Maestro Arturo Toscanini, Dr. Angelo Patri and Mr. Don Ameche. These five men served as Directors until the first annual meeting.

The purpose for which the corporation was formed was made explicit in the certificate:

“To solicit and collect funds and contributions and receive by gift, deed, bequest or devise and otherwise acquire money and property of every kind and description, and to administer, expend, contribute, use and otherwise dispose of the principal and income of the same exclusively in furnishing aid and assistance for relief of suffering in Italy. . . .”

With these objectives in mind, the five trustees proceeded with the work of organizing the agency. At their first meeting Mr. Taylor was elected President; Mr. Darragh A. Park, a Vice-President of the Manufacturers Trust Company, was chosen as Treasurer, and Judge Juvenal Marchisio of the Court of Domestic Relations of New York was designated Executive Vice-President. Directors and officers were chosen in due course. The meeting was notified that the President's War Relief Control Board had licensed and certified American Relief for Italy, Inc., thus qualifying the latter agency to receive funds from the National War Fund. The Officers then set about preparing a budget for submission to the Fund and gave consideration to plans to authorize various individuals and groups to contribute relief materials, such as food, clothing and medicines, under the supervision of the new corporation.

At subsequent meetings of the Trustees and Directors a board of seventeen directors was elected for the corporation which was composed of prominent Italo-Americans who were outstanding leaders in Italian communities throughout the United States and Americans experienced through many years' official contact with the Italian people. Certain changes in offices and officers were also effected. Mr. Taylor, who had been serving as President of the organization, resigned that office to become Chairman of the Board, and was succeeded as President by Judge Marchisio who obtained a leave of absence from the bench in order to assume full-time, active direction of the agency. An executive committee was also created, with the Honorable Henry P. Fletcher, former United States Ambassador to Italy, serving as Chairman. Mr. Taylor's resignation as President was motivated by President Roosevelt's request that he return to Italy as Personal Representative to Pope Pius XII immediately following the liberation of Rome in June 1944.

The American agency was now a functioning reality. Collections started and stock-piles of relief materials began to accumulate for eventual shipment to Italy. The next step was to effect appropriate distribution in that country. In Mr. Taylor's own words, quoted from one of his reports to the Board of Directors, we learn that this was no small task:

“I arrived in Italy in June of 1944, not long after Rome had been liberated. I was aware of the great need of unified distributive facilities. I began to

explore the field to find what agencies were available in a manner that would be satisfactory. . . . I found that on a national basis there was no organization that would quite meet the purpose of distributing these free donations in a manner that would insure that those in greatest need would receive the greatest benefit."

Upon investigation, Mr. Taylor discovered that the Italian Red Cross was in a state of complete disorganization. Because of its long domination by the Fascist government, all of its records, funds and officers had disappeared into the north with the remnants of the Mussolini regime. With the cooperation of Premier Ivanoe Bonomi and other Italian leaders, Mr. Taylor secured the services of Dr. Umberto Zanotti-Bianco, an experienced figure in the field of education, child welfare and various aspects of relief, and under his guidance the Italian Red Cross gradually resumed its function as a vital national agency.

But the reactivated Red Cross, with its lack of resources and limited personnel, could never undertake alone the enormous task of distribution. Some entity much larger and more truly representative of all aspects of Italian life was deemed necessary. Mr. Taylor conceived the idea of a national committee to be composed of representatives of the four most influential Italian organizations — the Vatican, the Government, the Red Cross and the Confederation of Labor.

This Committee, through its subcommittees in all of the liberated provinces and communes, was to be the sole channel of distribution of all relief materials received in Italy from any source. Opposition to such a plan was strong from almost every allied agency, including the Army and the American Red Cross, for so long as Italy remained under Allied Military Government these agencies considered that the responsibility for relief was solely theirs. But through the painstaking and ingenious endeavours of Mr. Taylor, who met separately and collectively with allied officials, with Italian Government officials and with individual Italian leaders over a period of many weeks, always with the active support of His Holiness the Pope and Prime Minister Ivanoe Bonomi, all obstacles to the formation of such a Committee were overcome. The Italian Government contributed an initial operating fund of ten million lire and the Vatican five million lire for relief and in September, 1944, a Government Decree established the Ente Nazionale per la Distribuzione dei Soccorsi in Italia — E.N.D.S.I. (National Committee for the Distribution of Relief in Italy).

Mr. Taylor's Presidential assignment to the Pope precluded his devoting full time to relief activities on the scene and he therefore chose Mr. Howard B. Barr, an American Red Cross field representative, as his Deputy. Mr. Barr was experienced in welfare work and had been in Italy since the allied invasion of Sicily in 1942. His knowledge of existing needs, his ability and his enthusiasm for the project were among the qualifications which merited his selection for this post.

With the executive organization now established, the mechanics of operation were the next consideration. Here again great difficulties were encountered which necessitated ap-

proaches on the part of Mr. Taylor to the Italian Government and to various allied officials. Transportation was a prime factor. Shipping space was at a premium owing to wartime conditions and restrictions, and overland transport in Italy was operating at a minimum due to damage or destruction of rolling stock. Warehousing facilities were also scarce as a result of devastating bombardments which had leveled huge sections of the large cities. Through persistent efforts and repeated pleas for urgent action in order to begin the task of relieving the suffering, free space was allocated on United States Navy vessels to bring the materials from America; unloading in the port of Naples was free of charge; the Vatican offered monasteries and churches in Naples to be used as warehouses for the arriving goods, and United States Army trucks as well as the Italian and allied military railroads were offered free of cost for the transporting of these materials to Rome and other distribution centers.

During this same period, while Mr. Taylor was occupied in Italy with means of distribution, Judge Marchisio was engaged in America with a campaign of promotion and collection. Under his direction the headquarters of American Relief for Italy, Inc., were established in New York, and in due course more than 125 Committees were functioning in every important community of American life with emphasis on Italian-American sectors. Through the media of press conferences, radio programs and public meetings in various parts of the country, Judge Marchisio, after a brief personal visit to Italy and as a result of continual reports from Mr. Taylor, stressed the need of a great mass of the Italian people for such bare essentials as food, clothing, shoes and medicines. Warehouses were established in New York for the receipt of donated goods, and a small shipping staff and office staff were engaged.

The stage was now set for one of the great achievements in the history of private relief ever sponsored by Americans. The measure of its success, as recounted in the following pages, does honor to Judge Marchisio, his principal assistant Dominic J. Marcello, Piero Bonelli and Rosalie Rubino, to his small but expert staff and to the numerous individuals and generous groups who participated in this vast, humanitarian enterprise.

## *Operation*

As has been stated, American Relief for Italy, Inc., was authorized to share in the National War Fund so ably organized and headed by Winthrop Aldrich. The allocation received from the Fund for the agency's first operating year, October 1, 1944, to September 30, 1945, was \$2,000,000, but, through the generosity of American donors, the value of some 8,000,000 pounds of relief materials shipped to Italy during that same period was in excess of five times that amount.

The first shipment left the United States in October, 1944, and from that time on a steady flow was maintained. The materials included for the most part clothing, shoes,

vitamin tablets and powdered milk. A sizable quantity of medical equipment in the form of first aid kits and clinical instruments also went forward. Among other items sent from time to time, when accumulated supplies warranted, were blankets, serge cloth, sheeting and needles and thread.

Regular distributions were begun in the entire liberated central and southern regions of the country, and were admirably conducted by the local subcommittees representing the Church, the State, Labor Organizations and the Red Cross. In each community these representatives were actual residents and thus knew the instances of greatest need.

One of the earliest regions cared for was the Abruzzi where ENDSI in 1944 won a race against time by completing a distribution of winter clothing just before the mountain roads became impassable because of severe weather. Next came Cassino, most ravaged of all localities. Not only had battle wrought death and destruction, but long years of attack from malaria had claimed a high toll among the inhabitants of this section. Even before supplies began to arrive from America, Mr. Taylor had located and secured from the U.S. Army a tremendous quantity of atabrin tablets which were distributed immediately in an effort to stem the tide of this scouring malady.

While clothing was distributed direct to the individual, milk and vitamins were generally consigned to children's institutions and hospitals where they were administered under supervision, thereby insuring constant daily consumption. As relief activities expanded and child-feeding programs were initiated, an estimated 200,000 infants and children in institutions were receiving milk and vitamins daily.

Despite the cooperation of the U. S. Army and the Allied Control Commission in lending trucks and vehicles, the transportation problem became noticeably acute in the very earliest months of distribution. Consequently Judge Marchisio made an appeal to Italian-American business men for fifty trucks. The response was prompt and gratifying, and eventually an impressive fleet of 178 vehicles bearing appropriate inscriptions was to be seen travelling the length and breadth of liberated Italy carrying its burden of friendship and assistance.

In addition to the regular distribution of general relief, special projects were undertaken from time to time to meet the unusual needs in particular areas. One outstanding accomplishment in this respect was the erection of a hospital for malaria patients at Cassino. This area had long been of grave concern to the Ministry of Public Health and its chronic condition became acute in the aftermath of war, but the Ministry was powerless to help due to lack of resources. Funds were secured from American Relief for Italy and a hospital was constructed from renovated Army barracks and equipped with instruments and drugs donated by two national medical committees, chaired by Dr. Charles Muzzicato and Dr. Arturo Castiglione, ably assisted by Doctors C. Guarini, Nicola Giganti and Manlio Terragni, which were operating as permittees of American Relief for Italy. In due course eight more hospitals were erected in the critical areas of Italy and remain today as permanent evidence of the friendship and generosity of the

American people. The need for medical aid was so great that ultimately billions of units of penicillin, insulin and liver extract, millions of aspirin, sulfa and vitamin tablets, hundreds of thousands of hypodermic needles, rubber gloves, gauze, bandages and other miscellaneous medical items were donated or purchased and 350 hospitals or clinics in every stricken Italian community were being supplied with these vital necessities.

Another noteworthy contribution to the field of medical aid was the gift of 98 ambulances, some of which were purchased in Italy, to the Italian Red Cross. These were in turn assigned to various provinces and communes which had been deprived of this vital service either through destruction by bombardment or theft by the retreating German forces. The enemy had shown no mercy.

Shortly after the end of the war in Italy, in the spring of 1945, Mr. Taylor had occasion to visit his home in Florence. It was his first visit to that city since the beginning of hostilities. Upon his arrival there he was shocked at the condition of hundreds of Italian soldiers swarming down from the north as they made their way home from enemy prison camps. They were roaming the streets of Florence in varying degrees of exhaustion and disease, roofless and unfed, ragged and unwashed. He contacted ENDSI in Rome, as well as his own Deputy, Howard Barr, and emergency assistance was sent immediately. Pending its arrival, Mr. Taylor and the local ENDSI representative found an old abandoned convent where they set up a shelter for these pitiful creatures. A soup kitchen was established in the courtyard of the building, showers were installed where, with the aid of soap from local ENDSI supplies, they were able to rid themselves of the filth of the prison camps, clothing brought up from Rome was distributed to each, and after a few days' rest and first-aid attention where necessary they were able to proceed on their weary way. This shelter was maintained until the Government was able to make other arrangements for the care of these returning soldiers.

In October of 1945 Mr. Howard Barr, who had been serving as official representative of American Relief for Italy in Rome as well as Deputy to Mr. Taylor, returned to the United States and submitted a report to the Board on the accomplishments of relief distribution in Italy. His report disclosed that up to the end of September, 1945, 18,000,000 pounds of relief materials valued at \$30,000,000 had been received and distributed to the needy. Moreover, the help given showed that every effort was made to care first for the most desperate cases. Particular attention had been given to the children of the country, and the report further showed that more than 4,321,000 pounds of milk and milk products had been received together with nearly 1,180,000 pounds of food.

Shortly after his return to the United States, Mr. Barr was given another assignment in this country and was succeeded in his post in Rome by Lt. Col. John McSweeney who had been Chief Child Welfare Officer for the U. S. Army in Italy. Lt. Col. McSweeney had been in Italy since the allied invasion in 1942 and was well versed on conditions throughout the country.

All through the winter of 1945-1946 collection campaigns were conducted in the United States and relief goods were flowing to Italy as quickly as they reached the New

York warehouse. There was deep understanding among every one concerned that lives hung in the balance in Italy and that suffering and hardship were to be countered by unstinted generosity and untiring fulfilment of obligations to humanity.

It must be stressed that these campaigns were not supported solely by the members of any one faith — nor were they confined totally to the Italo-American communities. Catholics, Jews and Protestants alike gave their wholehearted cooperation throughout the nation. War Relief Services of the National Catholic Welfare Conference under the inspired direction of His Excellency Archbishop Patrick A. O'Boyle and the Right Reverend Monsignor Edward E. Swanstrom made the first and largest contribution of relief materials—six million pounds—the result of a two-week campaign throughout the country; and throughout the existence of American Relief for Italy continued to pour in millions of additional pounds of supplies. The Jewish Joint Distribution Committee; various Protestant committees working through the Baptists, Quakers, Seventh Day Adventists, Brethren, Church World Service, Labor—A.F.L. and C.I.O. unions, and others, the Il Progresso Campaign, headed by Generoso Pope—all contributed millions of pounds of goods and clothing, as did the American Red Cross with its usual generosity.

Each and every group in the United States received reports from their representatives or missions in Italy to the effect that American Relief for Italy was adhering faithfully to its stated principle of non-discrimination, distributing all goods according to need, regardless of the recipients' religion, race or political belief. From time to time these denominational groups made special donations which were of critical need.

An outstanding illustration of such a case was the initial gift of 330 heads of cattle from the Brethren and National Catholic Rural Life Conference to destitute farmers in Italy, whose livestock had been destroyed. A survey was carefully made to determine the instances of greatest need throughout the central agricultural region, and the cattle were then consigned to the farmers with the restriction that under no circumstance could the animals be slaughtered. They were given for purposes of augmenting the milk supply and for breeding to produce a larger, healthier herd. In exceptional cases animals were assigned to children's institutions in order to insure an adequate daily supply of milk for the undernourished youngsters. The representatives of the Brethren, in cooperation with American Relief for Italy and ENDSI, made a very just and worthy allocation of this valuable gift of relief. After this experiment the Brethren contributed several hundreds of heads of cattle in a determined effort to replenish Italy's livestock.

The Ladies Committee of American Relief for Italy sponsored many activities which netted worthwhile financial assistance. In the early spring of 1946 this group, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Myron Taylor whose concern and interest in relief for Italy was most devoted, and with the ever generous and valuable support of Mme. Margaret Draper Boncompagni, undertook to sponsor a performance of the Metropolitan Opera in New York. The voluntary services of nearly every noted artist of the Metropolitan were secured for the occasion and Mr. Edward Johnson, General Manager of the Metropolitan, also gave his un-



stinted cooperation. The venture was a complete success in every respect, and the net profit was more than \$35,000.

In April of 1946 American Relief for Italy had rounded out two years of activity. The annual report rendered by the Corporation showed that in that two-year period more than 28,500,000 pounds of relief materials valued at \$40,000,000 had been sent to Italy, and not less than 4,285,850 Italians, more than one-half of them children, had been aided. This quantity had constituted thirty-five shipments by steamer and seven by airplane, the air shipments being desperately needed medicines.

Up to this point the National War Fund had allocated \$5,468,407 to American Relief for Italy, Inc., but signified that its campaign for funds in the latter part of 1945 (for the year 1946) was to be its last and that the Fund's activities would officially terminate at the end of 1946. Judge Marchisio then obtained approval of the Fund to launch a private collection campaign. His efforts, coupled with the campaign for funds sponsored by the Permittees of the Agency through the spring and summer of 1946, resulted in nearly \$1,000,000 in cash donations and more than 10,000,000 pounds of materials in kind. The funds collected were promptly converted into vitally needed materials, and thus the constant flow of relief to Italy continued.

Toward the close of 1946 the great need for emergency general relief had subsided. The stamina, industry and resiliency inherent in the Italian people made them ready and able to help themselves.

There was, however, one problem which hovered as a dark cloud on the horizon of a rehabilitated Italy. Mr. Taylor and Judge Marchisio were gravely concerned with the thousands of war-orphaned boys roaming the countryside and the streets of the big cities, begging, stealing, and generally drifting towards delinquency in an effort to survive. Their ranks were growing to alarming proportions and the problem of what to do with these boys soon became urgent.

Upon the initiative of Mr. Taylor a project for the physical and moral rehabilitation of these boys was begun. The outgrowth of Mr. Taylor's action was the "Opera per il Ragazzo della Strada," more popularly known as the "Shoeshine Boys" project. In the early days following the liberation of Rome, Mr. Taylor had seen the need to help these boys as a vital part of the whole child-care program, but objections to his proposals were raised to the effect that these "street boys" were representative of a social problem rather than a war-relief problem. With remarkable logic, tenacity and power of persuasion, he approached Church, State and Allied officials and succeeded in breaking down the negative argument of the opposition.

Mr. Taylor believed that the physical <sup>46</sup>needs of these boys were of prime importance and that moral rehabilitation would naturally parallel or follow. It is normally a hungry mouth that forces a hand to reach in stealth for a piece of bread, and so the first relief endeavor on behalf of these lads was the establishment in Rome of day centers and the famous "Shoeshine Hotel."

Indigo

The Rt. Rev. Monsignor John Patrick Carroll-Abbing, an Irish priest long resident in Italy and who, from the beginning of the war, had dedicated all his energies to the relief of the suffering, undertook the program of bringing to shelter the boys who were sleeping in the doorways, on the street and under the arches of railway stations. Through his guidance and energetic leadership the "Shoeshine Boys" program in Italy grew, until today it is recognized as one of the best conceived rehabilitation programs for children in the world. To him was given the trust of bringing back to society the orphans of Italy and the children whom life had disinherited.

When the centers were first established, the boys were fed and clothed by American Relief for Italy and were free to come and go as they pleased. Even today the centers are not disciplinary institutions; they are havens of refuge and security. In addition to food and clothing, wholesome recreational facilities are provided as well as limited materials with which to engage in arts and crafts.

By the autumn of 1946 several thousand boys had been taken off the streets and given shelter and a measure of training. About this time Monsignor Carroll-Abbing and another priest associated with him, Don Antonio Rivolta, proposed that a more permanent establishment be created. The idea was pursued and ultimately, with the acquisition of a roofless, shattered building at Santa Marinella on the coast not far from Rome, they founded "Il Villaggio del Fanciullo" or "Boys' Town." It was not to be an orphanage nor a reformatory but a real village where free boys would live as free citizens. There were to be no restrictions nor harsh impositions, but instead liberty, and with it voluntary self-discipline, self-government and a sense of responsibility. American Relief for Italy furnished the initial food, clothing, blankets and other essentials to encourage this industrious project. One by one the original buildings were repaired and other buildings erected to house the machine shop, the pottery shop, the dormitories, the craft studios until it became a thriving, autonomous republic controlled entirely by the boys themselves.

With the advent of 1947 and the termination of the National War Fund, another campaign for funds was planned for the late winter. The dissolution of American Relief for Italy, Inc., was also decided, as was the creation of a successor organization to administer such funds as might be derived from the campaign. The nationwide drive for funds began on February 1, 1947, and extended through the month of March. The collection resulted in more than \$6,000,000 in money and materials, and was a tremendous success in view of the frequent demands that had been made on the American public in the recent past.

ARI, Inc., the successor organization, continued to function until September 1949. At that time the problem of the abandoned boys of the streets was receiving the organization's full attention and the major portion of the agency's proceeds. A smaller Agency was then created — the BOYS' REPUBLIC OF ITALY, INC. — concerned solely with the plight of these unfortunate children — and its name clearly established the purposes in the mind of the American public. Mr. Taylor remained as Chairman of the Board, Judge Juvenal

Marchisio as its President and the Rt. Rev. Monsignor John Patrick Carroll-Abbing as its Director in Italy.

With the modest beginning at Santa Marinella forty miles north of Rome this project grew and today there are eight Boys' Towns in Italy — four villages at the Republic of Santa Marinella, under the direction of Msgr. Carrol-Abbing; two villages in Sicily, another at Pozzuoli, outside of Naples and Forte Prenestino in Rome which, in addition to being a permanent home for some three hundred children, is a day center for more than one thousand others. In all, since December 1945, twenty-two thousand children have benefited from this program.

The four Boys' Towns outside the Republic at Santa Marinella were built and sponsored by the following groups: The Franklin D. Roosevelt Trade School was built by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, David Dubinsky, President, and Luigi Antonini, Vice-President, and is located at Mondello in Sicily. A Committee chaired by Thomas F. Tillona and strongly supported by Jacob Potofsky, President of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, August Bellanca, George Baldanzi and Anthony Froise, Vice-Presidents, sponsored the Boys' Town of New York, located at Asquasanta, also in Sicily. Six miles north of Naples, at Pozzuoli, is the Boys' Town constructed by the members of Local 48, of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, headed by Edward Molisani, Forte Prenestino was initiated with funds principally granted by American Relief for Italy.

More than a home which gives food and shelter, those towns set the pattern for a way of life. The progress in each "town" is determined by the industry of its young citizens, and these children are quick to feel the sense of responsibility and pride that comes with good living. The trades they learn develop in each of them the ability to earn a livelihood; and the lessons of community living and responsibility give to each of them a faith in the democratic way of life.

All this, you in America have given to Italy, to her men and women and, perhaps, most important of all, to her children. It is these children who are Italy's future, and charitable Americans with an intelligent interest and confidence in that future have made it secure.

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*Aquasanta, Palermo*



*F. D. Roosevelt Trade School*

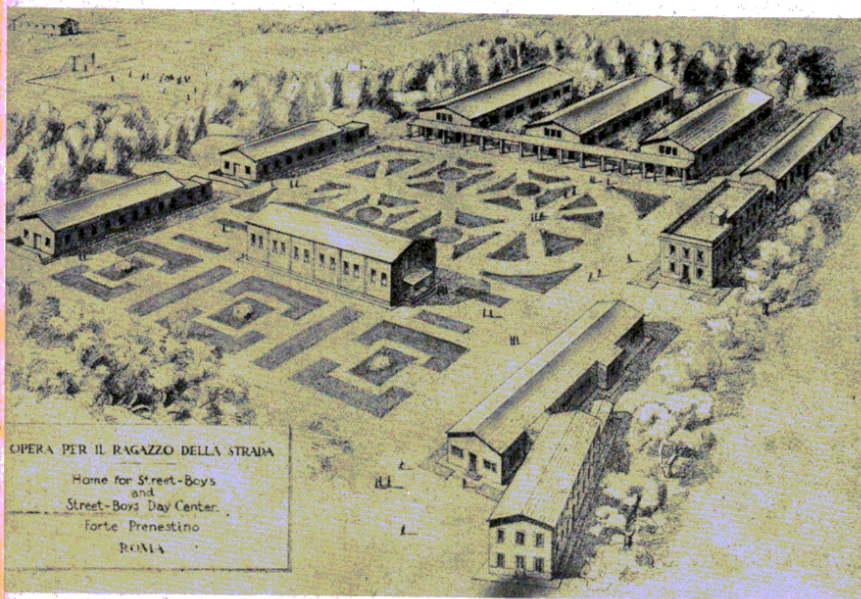


ORPHANED, MAIMED,  
HOMELESS ...  
INNOCENT VICTIMS OF WAR ...  
ABANDONED, DELINQUENT —  
THESE CHILDREN  
WERE PREY TO ALL EVIL —  
THEN ...

*a chance  
to live ...*

In each of the eight towns built in various sections of Italy, these young citizens have assumed the responsibility of running their own towns.

An American ideal has taken hold — these boys have learned loyalty instead of treachery; honesty instead of fraud; work instead of idleness; tolerance instead of prejudice; liberty instead of license.

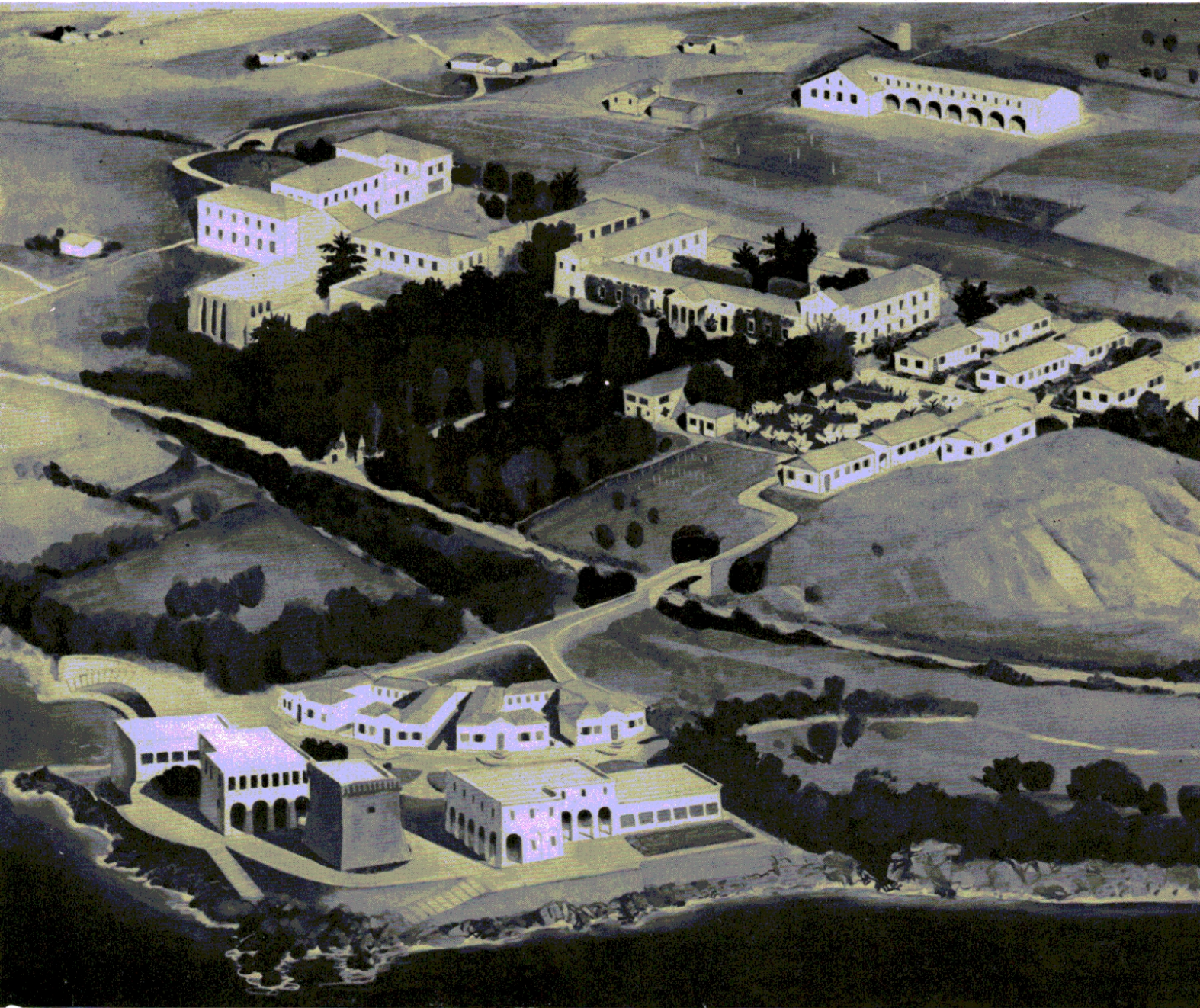


*Forte Prenestino*

Pozzuoli



*your help  
has been  
an investment  
in democracy*



*The Boys' Republic  
Santa Marinella*

## YOU GAVE . . . .

more than *seventy-one million* pounds of food, clothing, medicines and equipment over a period of seven years; in addition to more than *one million dollars* which helped build hospitals, health and food centers and eight boys' towns.

## IT COST . . . .

in administration, six percent of the total contributed.

In this computation there is not included the hundreds of thousands of dollars in land and buildings obtained free of cost in Italy and supplies contributed by the American Red Cross there. Also where services instead of supplies were given it has been impossible to interpret in dollars and cents the value of such services. These include labor, gratuitous transport of critical supplies of other agencies working for relief in Italy, in the full use of back loading in return trips of trucks from hauls of relief materials to augment the food supply under the Ministries of Food and Industry during the severe shortage, etc., etc.