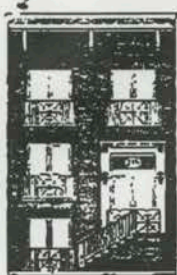


TO: Senator Dole
FR: Kerry

RE: Sons of Italy Banquet

*Audience of approximately 600 Italian-Americans attending annual banquet.

*Honorees at this year's banquet are Northwest Airlines Co-Chairman Alfred Checchi (Check-ee) and Penn State Football Coach Joe Paterno.



SONS OF ITALY FOUNDATION

Order Sons of Italy in America

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News

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Anthony Mark Dalessandro
Director of Communications

SIF to Honor Corporate Titan, College Football Legend

Northwest Airlines' Al Checchi and Penn State Coach Joe Paterno to Receive the 1996 NELA

Washington, D.C., April 24, 1996 – The Sons of Italy Foundation (SIF) will honor Northwest Airlines Co-Chairman Alfred Checchi and Penn State Football Coach Joe Paterno with the organization's most prestigious annual award, the National Education and Leadership Award (NELA). Checchi and Paterno will receive the honor at the SIF's Eighth Annual NELA Gala, May 2, at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium, in Washington, D.C. President Clinton is expected to attend the event, where the SIF will award more than \$60,000 in scholarships.

Checchi worked at Marriott Corporation for seven years before leaving for a position with Bass Brothers Enterprises, where he led the acquisition of a controlling interest in Walt Disney Inc. Checchi and Co-Chairman Gary Wilson organized a small group of investors to purchase Northwest Airlines in 1989. Checchi and Wilson have turned the company around. For six years, Northwest has been rated first in on-time performance and has had the least customer complaints among the seven largest airlines.

Paterno has headed the football program at Pennsylvania State University for 30 years. He is the only coach to win all four of the traditional New Year's Day bowl games.

Last year's NELA honoree, Joseph E. Antonini, former CEO of Kmart, is chairman of the gala, and local reporter Carolyn Presutti, of WUSA-TV in Washington, will serve as emcee.

(more)

Add1-SIF

At this year's NELA ceremony, the SIF will establish scholarships in the names of Checchi and Paterno that will be awarded to the top high school seniors in the 1996 National Leadership Grant Competition (NLGC), the SIF's annual merit-based scholarship competition.

Past NELA honorees include former St. John's University Head Basketball Coach Lou Carnesecca (1989); the late U.S. Congressman Silvio O. Conte (1990); U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia (1991); Anthony S. Fauci, M.D., director of the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases (1992), entertainer Annette Funicello (1993), FBI Director Louis J. Freeh (1994), and Antonini (1995).

"Al Checchi and Joe Paterno are among the most inspirational members of the Italian American community," said SIF Chairman Paul S. Polo. "Checchi was a great success at Marriott and Bass Brothers before he took on the challenge of turning around Northwest Airlines, and Joe Paterno is a hero to so many Americans of all ages."

"Both of these men exemplify the qualities we look for in a NELA recipient," said SIF President Valentino Ciullo. "They are excellent examples of hard work, dedication, courage, and strength of character."

The SIF will recognize 11 outstanding students by presenting them with National Leadership Grants, which are awarded for outstanding academic achievement and proven leadership potential. In addition, the SIF will present a special scholarship for one year of study abroad at John Cabot University, an American institution in Rome.

Established in 1959 by the Order Sons of Italy in America (OSIA), the Sons of Italy Foundation supports medical research, disaster relief, academic scholarships, and the preservation of Italian and Italian-American culture through its own projects and through grants to other nonprofit institutions. Since 1968, OSIA and SIF have awarded more than \$21 million in scholarship support.

###

THANK YOU.

**IT'S A PRIVILEGE TO JOIN YOU THIS
EVENING.**

**AND LET ME JOIN IN PAYING
TRIBUTE TO YOUR HONOREES THIS
EVENING--AL CHECCHI (CHECK-EE) AND
JOE PATERNO.**

**NOW, I KNOW THIS IS NOT A
POLITICAL GATHERING. BUT I DO
WANT TO SAY TO MY FRIEND JOE
PATERNO THAT BOTH TIMES THE PENN**

**STATE NITTANY LIONS WON THE
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP, THERE
WAS A REPUBLICAN IN THE WHITE
HOUSE.**

**NOW, COACH PATERNO, THAT MAY
BE A COINCIDENCE, BUT WHY TAKE
THE CHANCE?**

**THE POET ROBERT BROWNING
WROTE, "OPEN MY HEART AND YOU
WILL SEE ENGRAVED INSIDE OF IT
ITALY."**

**AS COUNTLESS IMMIGRANTS TO
AMERICA'S SHORES WOULD CONFIRM,
ITALY IS ENGRAVED INSIDE MILLIONS
OF AMERICAN HEARTS.**

**AND I JUST WANTED TO DROP BY
THIS EVENING TO TELL YOU THAT
ITALY IS ALSO ENGRAVED INSIDE MY
HEART.**

**BACK AT THE TURN OF THIS
CENTURY--IN 1901 TO BE EXACT--A
YOUNG TEENAGER JOINED MANY OF**

**HIS ITALIAN COUNTRYMEN IN SEEKING
A NEW LIFE IN AMERICA.**

**AFTER ARRIVING AT ELLIS ISLAND,
HE FOUND WORK IN NEW YORK AS A
SHOEMAKER. HE MARRIED ANOTHER
ITALIAN IMMIGRANT, AND STARTED A
FAMILY. HE WORKED HARD AND
RAISED HIS CHILDREN AS HE HAD BEEN
RAISED.**

**THEY WERE TAUGHT TO LOVE
AMERICA, AND TO RESPECT HONESTY,
DECENCY, AND HARD WORK.**

**IN THE 1940'S, LIKE SO MANY
OTHER YOUNG MEN OF THAT TIME,
ONE OF THE IMMIGRANT'S SONS,
JOINED THE ARMY AND BECAME A
TECHNICAL SERGEANT. AND IN APRIL
OF 1945, THE IMMIGRANT'S SON WAS
AMONG THE THOUSANDS OF
AMERICAN TROOPS STATIONED IN HIS
FATHER'S HOMELAND--IN THE HILLS OF
ITALY.**

**BEGINNING IN THOSE RUGGED HILLS
AROUND THE VILLAGE OF CASTEL**

**D'AIANO, FORCES SPEARHEADED BY
THE 10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION WOULD
LEAPFROG THE MOUNTAINOUS SPINE
OF CENTRAL ITALY.**

**IF ALL WENT WELL, BOLOGNA
WOULD BE SNARED AND THE PO
VALLEY SECURED, CLEARING THE WAY
FOR MARK CLARK'S FIFTH ARMY TO
CHASE THE RETREATING GERMANS TO-
-AND PERHAPS BEYOND--THE BRENNER
PASS.**

**WHILE THE TROOPS WAITED FOR
THE WEATHER TO CLEAR SO THEIR
ATTACK COULD BEGAN, THEY
RECEIVED WORD ON APRIL 12TH THAT
FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT HAD DIED. LIKE
MOST OF HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS, THE
IMMIGRANT'S SON SHED SOME TEARS
OVER THE LOSS OF HIS COMMANDER-
IN CHIEF, BUT HE HAD LITTLE TIME TO
GRIEVE.**

**TWO DAYS LATER, THE ALLIED
TROOPS LAUNCHED AIR ATTACKS**

**AGAINST THE ENTIRE ENEMY LINE.
COMPANY I OF THE 85TH REGIMENT
OCCUPIED THE LEFT FLANK OF A TWO-
MILE FRONT. DIRECTLY OPPOSITE
WAS A RIDGE OF HILLS HELD BY
ENEMY GUNNERS. COMPANY I'S
DESTINATION WAS TO BE A SUMMIT
LISTED ON THE MAPS AS HILL 913.**

**THE BATTLE FOR HILL 913 WAS TO
BE A BLOODY ONE. ALL AROUND, MEN
WERE BEING HIT. AND THEN THE
SERGEANT NOTICED THAT A**

**LIEUTENANT IN I COMPANY HAD BEEN
HIT, AND WAS LYING FACE DOWN IN
THE DIRT WITH HIS HANDS STRETCHED
OUT OVER HIS HEAD.**

**THE SERGEANT MADE HIS WAY
ACROSS FORTY YARDS OF SCARRED
EARTH, AND DRAGGED THE WOUNDED
LIEUTENANT BACK TO SAFETY.**

**THE NAME OF THE IMMIGRANT
WHO BECAME A SHOEMAKER WAS
ARTHUR CARAFA. HIS SON, THE
TECHNICAL SERGEANT WAS NAMED**

**FRANK. AND THE LIEUTENANT WHO
OWES A HUGE DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO
AN ITALIAN-AMERICAN IS NAMED BOB
DOLE.**

**I HAVE RETURNED TO CASTEL
D'AIANO ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS
SINCE THAT DAY IN 1945. AND EACH
TIME, I HAVE BEEN OVERWHELMED BY
THE KINDNESS AND THE GENEROSITY
OF THE ITALIAN PEOPLE.**

**MY LAST JOURNEY THERE WAS IN
1994, WHEN, LIKE SO MANY OTHER**

**VETERANS, I TRAVELLED TO EUROPE
FOR THE ACTIVITIES MARKING THE
40TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY.**

**FOR SEVERAL MONTHS PRIOR TO
MY EUROPEAN VISIT, I HAD BEEN
CONSIDERING A RUN FOR THE
PRESIDENCY IN 1996. BUT I HAD NOT
REACHED A CONCLUSION.**

**WHILE ON THE BEACHES OF
NORMANDY, AND IN THE HILLS OF
ITALY, I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO
WALK AND TALK WITH MY FELLOW**

**VETERANS, AND WITH THEIR WIVES
AND CHILDREN.**

**WE TALKED ABOUT THE AMERICA
FOR WHICH WE HAD FOUGHT, AND
FOR WHICH SOME OF OUR FRIENDS
HAD DIED.**

**IT WAS AN AMERICA THAT DID THE
IMPOSSIBLE AND NEVER PAUSED TO
BOAST ABOUT IT.**

**AN AMERICA THAT WOULD FIGHT
AND WIN THE LONG COLD WAR.**

**AN AMERICA THAT WOULD
OVERCOME THE SCOURGE OF POLIO,
AND AN AMERICA THAT WOULD LEAVE
ITS FOOTPRINTS ON THE MOON.**

**AND THEN I THOUGHT ABOUT THE
AMERICA OF TODAY. AN AMERICA
STILL STRONG IN SPIRIT, BUT AN
AMERICA THAT IS HEADED IN THE
WRONG DIRECTION. AN AMERICA
THAT TEETERED ON THE EDGE OF
BOTH FISCAL AND MORAL
BANKRUPTCY.**

**AND I DECIDED THERE IN THE HILLS
OF ITALY THAT MAYBE AMERICA
NEEDED SOMEONE WHO BELIEVED
THAT THE ITALIAN TRADITIONS OF
FAITH, FAMILY, AND THE DIGNITY OF
WORK ARE WHAT MAKE OUR
COUNTRY GREAT.**

**MAYBE AMERICA NEEDED SOMEONE
WHO KNEW SOMETHING ABOUT
SACRIFICE.**

**MAYBE AMERICA NEEDED SOMEONE
WHO WOULD NOT PERMIT THE SLOW**

**DECLINE OF A NATION HE LOVED SO
MUCH.**

**MAYBE AMERICA NEEDED SOMEONE
WHO WAS CONVINCED THAT OUR
FINEST HOUR IS NOT IN OUR PAST,
BUT IN OUR FUTURE.**

**MAYBE AMERICA NEEDED SOMEONE
WHO LEARNED ALL HE NEEDED TO
KNOW ABOUT THE GREATNESS OF HIS
COUNTRY, AND THE COURAGE OF HIS
COUNTRYMEN IN THE HILLS OF ITALY.**

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH. MAY
GOD BLESS ITALY. AND MAY GOD
BLESS AMERICA.**