



ITALIAN CONTEXT DURING

THE HAGUE CONGRESS

1946-1950



Introduction

It had been three years since the war had ended, and Italy, as many other European countries, was facing a phase of rebirth. Italy was very poor and destroyed. Like a phoenix, Italy literally started to rise from its ashes. The following are some signs of this. **It chose a democratic republic over a monarchy (1946)**. It wrote **the first Constitution** and called its citizens to **the first elections during which Luigi Einaudi was elected as the President (11 May 1948)** and Democrazia Cristiana (Christian Democracy party) was chosen to lead. Finally, **it participated in the Hague Congress with Altiero Spinelli**, who was the founder of the European Federalist Movement (1943). In the same year, on November 2nd, **Harry S. Truman was elected President of The United States of America for a second mandate**. This was crucial for the economic, social and cultural situation in Italy, since **it put the basis of the well-known Marshall Plan** that contributed to make Italy an economic power that shared the principles and values of the future European Union. It is also important to remember that **the Universal Declaration of Human rights was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December of the same year**.

Italian Constitution compared to the

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS 1/2



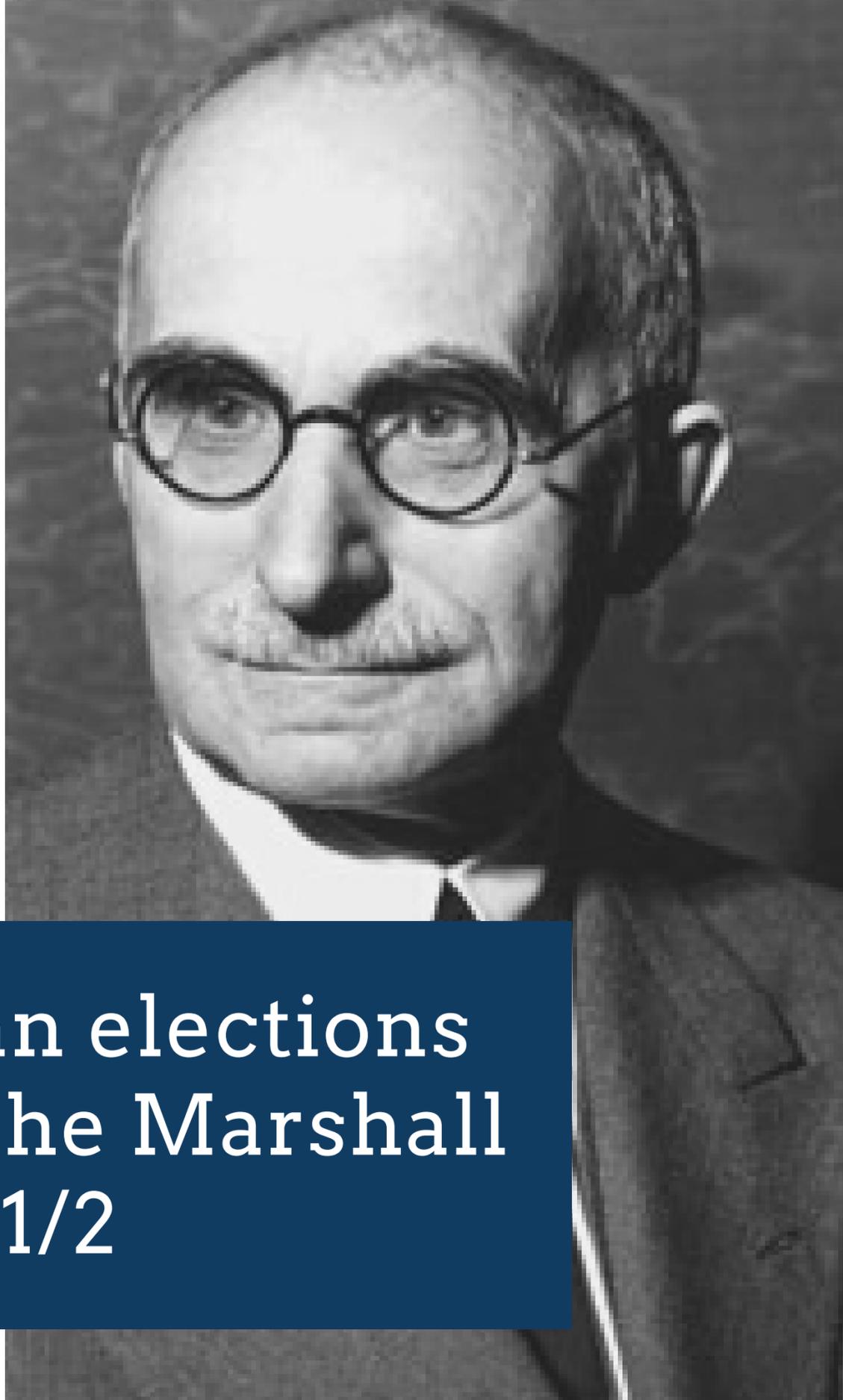
In the aftermath of the Second World War, the main European political powers recognized the need to write or rewrite the Constitutions. Reformulating the rules of civil coexistence was a response to the incivility that had been manifested itself with totalitarianisms and their tragic consequences. **This wave of constitutionalism started because the value of human rights per se was strongly felt. Human rights became constitutional rights that were considered crucial for shaping the new democratic societies.** The text of the Constitution of the Italian Republic was approved by the Constituent Assembly at the end of 1947, promulgated by the provisional Head of State, De Nicola, and became law in 1948. The Italian **Constitution contains the most complete list of rights and develops a strongly pluralistic idea of a republic, both at a territorial and social level as well as, of course, politically.**



Italian Constitution compared to the

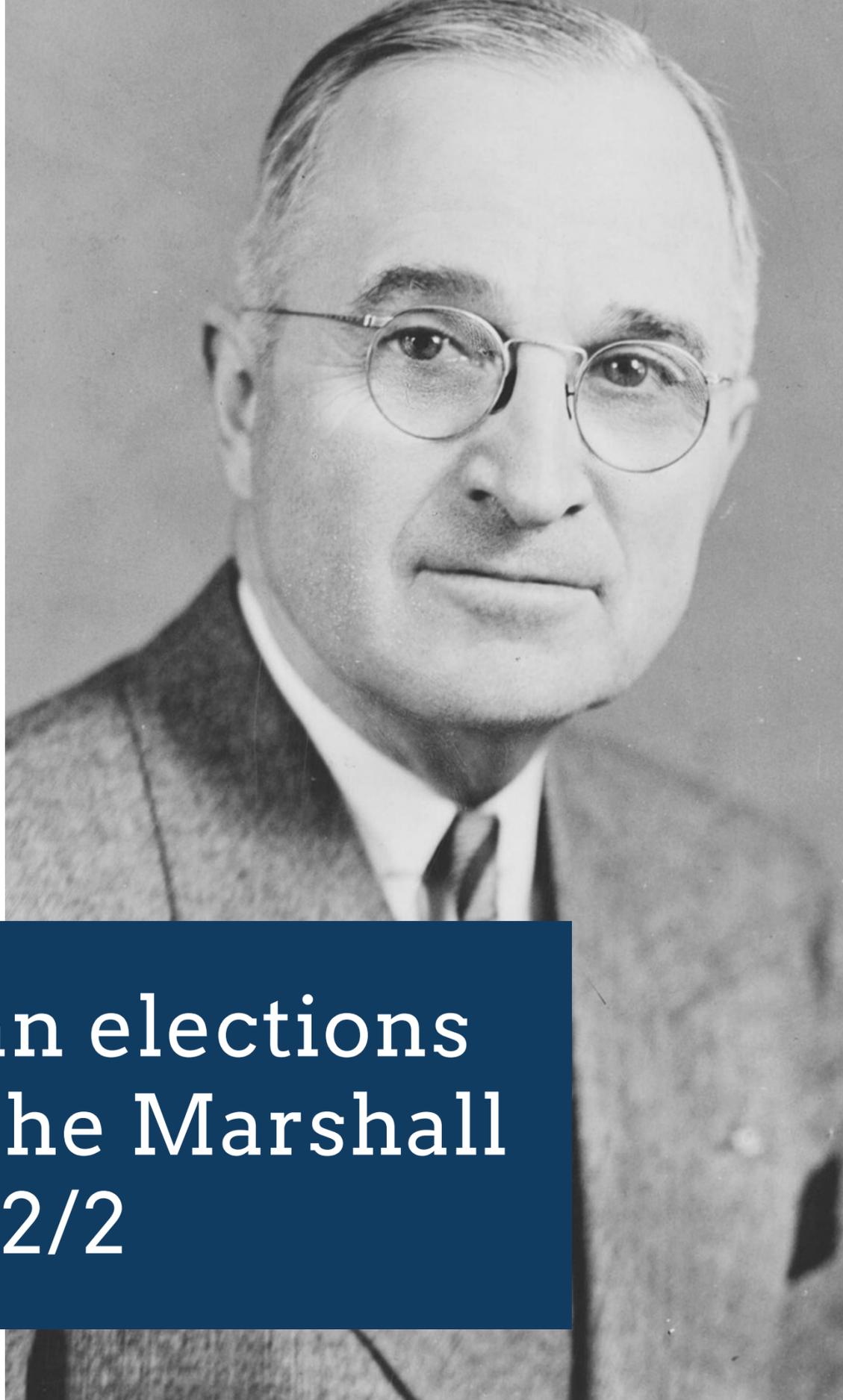
UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS 2/2

It is inevitable to see the harmony between the Constitution of the Italian Republic and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, **insofar as both have not only affirmed the innate and natural character of human rights but also shared the main concept that all citizens are equal in dignity and before the law, and are born free.** In this respect, it is possible to identify four pillars of the Italian constitutional order: the recognition of fundamental rights; the rights to education, work, art, science, scientific and technical research, and culture; the right to earn one's keep and to social security; the principle of equality.



Italian elections and the Marshall Plan 1/2

Soon after Luigi Einaudi was able to come back from his exile in Switzerland, he was elected to the Constituent Assembly for the list of the National Democratic Union (*Unione Democratica Nazionale*). In May 1947, following the 'landing' of socialists and communists from the government, Alcide De Gasperi formed his IV cabinet, Einaudi was called to be part of it as an independent, and had the vice-presidency of the Council. **In the aftermath of the 1948 political elections, which saw the great success of the Christian Democrats, Einaudi was elected for the presidency of the Republic.**



Italian elections and the Marshall Plan 2/2

Before the two World Wars, Italy's economy was based on agriculture. **Since the 1950's Italy has seen extraordinary economic growth, which completely changed the Italian lifestyle.** Specialists define the postwar period as the "economic miracle." It is in this context that **President Harry S. Truman** was a crucial political figure for the new Italian democracy. Indeed, in 1948, **he signed the Economic Assistance Act, which authorized the creation of a program that would help the nations of Europe recover and rebuild after the devastation wrought by World War II.** Commonly known as the Marshall Plan, named after the Secretary of State George Marshall, it aimed to stabilize Europe economically and politically so that European nations would not be tempted by the appeal of communist parties.

Fun Facts

OTHER THAN THE FASHION OF THIS PERIOD THAT MADE PRESIDENTS TRUMAN AND EINAUDI LOOK ALIKE, THERE ARE OTHER THINGS THAT MADE ITALY AND THE UNITED STATES SIMILAR

URBANAZATION

Through two majors building programs, UNRRA-CASAS and INA-CASA, both funded by the US, the conception of how to organize a house changed dramatically. Before these two programs, Italian houses were composed of one room.

NEW WORKER FIGURES

Italy affected a transformation in its social structure by looking at the American system. New figures of workers were born, for example managers, businessman, professionals, and technical workers.

TELEVISION

The introduction of television amplified the concept of a new kind of private life. At first, television was seen as an instrument to share information. It was possible to find one television for an entire building; people used to watch it together in the same living room. Afterwards, television became a status symbol.

FASHION AND CINEMA

Women started to dress up and introduce color into their wardrobe. This kind of enrichment was possible as well due to the introduction of glamour in Italian women's lives. Over time, the US, and more specifically Hollywood, influenced Italy greatly. Indeed, it is through Hollywood actresses that glamour started to spread.



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