

EVENT CARDS HISTORICAL TEXTS

Palmiro Togliatti - Palmiro Togliatti, Secretary of the Communist Party, was nicknamed "Il Migliore" for his strategic acumen and for his success in transforming the PCI into a mass party.

The votes in the drawer - Once the votes have been counted, the monarchists will level a baseless accusation against the republicans, claiming that they rigged the results with nearly a million "pre-filled" ballots.

Bolzano and Venezia Giulia - Due to the still uncertain international situation—Trieste was occupied by Tito's partisans—nearly a million Italians will be unable to vote in the referendum.

Municipal elections - The elections on June 2 are preceded by a "dress rehearsal" in the form of local elections held in many Italian municipalities a few months earlier.

Women's Suffrage - The 1946 elections were the first to be held by universal suffrage, in which women were finally able to exercise their right to vote.

Late sections - It will take several days to count the votes in some precincts. This delay will reignite the hopes of supporters of the monarchy that the results will be overturned.

Cassation Court - The Republic's victory was definitively sealed by the Supreme Court's ruling on June 18, which rejected the appeals regarding the interpretation of the electoral law.

Election rally - In the months leading up to the vote, rallies for both sides draw huge crowds, filling the squares of all of Italy's major cities.

First polls - The election also marks a first for the Doxa Institute's polls. The predictions in favor of the monarchy (48% to 40%) will be proven wrong by the election results.

CLN - A major impetus for the democratic transition came from the parties of the National Liberation Committee, which had led the Resistance movement in the years leading up to Liberation.

UNRRA - More than a few are speculating that the vital aid provided by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration could be cut off in the event of a shift to the left.

Warning from Pius XII - In his appeals to the people, the Pope is more concerned with warding off the communist threat than with taking an explicit stance on the institutional framework.

Party Secretary - The secretaries of all the major parties are working tirelessly in the run-up to the elections, managing to revive the "electoral machine" that had grown rusty during the Fascist era.

Radio and Newsreels - For the first time, the new media have joined rallies, the work of party activists, and the party press as tools for information and propaganda.

Giuseppe Romita - Interior Minister Romita, a member of the PSIUP, is the most ardent supporter of the referendum, which aims to secure popular support for the transition to a republic.

The stolen corpse - On the night of April 22-23, Mussolini's body was stolen. The act—claimed by the “Democratic Fascist Party”—further inflamed the atmosphere of the ongoing election campaign.

“Front of the Average Man” - In February 1946, the first congress was held of the party that had formed around the newspaper of the same name, which espoused anti-political views. The term “qualunquista” originated from this event.

Benedetto Croce - The renowned Italian intellectual is appointed president of the Liberal Party. As a supporter of the monarchy, he asks the party leadership not to take an official stance.

Maria José di Savoia - Many years later, the wife of Italy's last king would recount that she had voted for the socialist Saragat and had cast a blank ballot in the referendum.

The King of May - In a belated attempt to save the monarchy, on May 9, 1946, Victor Emmanuel III abdicated in favor of his son Umberto and left the country for Alexandria,

Egypt.

Party Press - The official organs of the various political parties, which resumed their activities after the twenty-year Fascist period, served as a key tool for information and propaganda for both sides.

Freedom of Conscience - Although the vast majority of delegates supported the Republic, the Christian Democratic Party convention did not take a position on the referendum, leaving the decision up to the voters.

Republic or Chaos - Faced with the uncertainty surrounding the referendum results, PSIUP Secretary Pietro Nenni coined the slogan “The Republic or Chaos” to underscore the importance of what was at stake.

Alcide de Gasperi - Alcide De Gasperi, secretary of the Christian Democratic Party, is regarded by many as the true architect of the postwar years, both nationally and internationally.