



“The Bersaglieri are Italy running forward”: General Portolano defends the values of the Armed Forces

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A wave of indignation and solidarity swept across the country after the incident at a Lombard scientific high school, where some teachers expressed reservations about welcoming the Associazione Nazionale Bersaglieri, judging its values as “distant from those of the school.” A serious judgment that touched the heart of national identity, generating a firm response from the highest institutions of the State.

But among the most authoritative and vibrant voices, that of the **Chief of Defense Staff, General of the Army Corps Luciano Portolano**, resonates with particular strength and dignity. His words are a clear call to national conscience and collective memory, a bulwark against any attempt at ideological revisionism disguised as educational debate.

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“Values not divisive, but universal”

In a heartfelt letter addressed to the President of the Associazione Nazionale Bersaglieri, **General of the Army Corps Giuseppe Nicola Tota**, General Portolano expressed **“the firmest solidarity and total closeness”** to a Corps that represents not only a glorious military tradition but an ethical and civil model for the entire society.

“It is simply unacceptable that the values the Bersaglieri embody – and which have always incarnated the very essence of the Italian Armed Forces – could be considered in contrast with any educational path.”

Portolano does not limit himself to an official defense: **he lists one by one those values that every Italian school should teach**. Loyalty, sense of duty, spirit of sacrifice, love of country, solidarity, and respect for institutions – founding principles of our Republic and our Constitution.

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“The Bersaglieri are a bastion of Italian identity”

The Chief of Defense Staff recalls how the peripheral sections of the Association are **“true bastions of Italian identity and active citizenship”**, capable of testifying, with sobriety and passion, a historical memory that does not divide but unites.

In a moment when **national identity is often subject to instrumentalizations or removals**, Portolano courageously states that “in every school these universal values should be conveyed,” implicitly condemning the act of exclusion as **a wound to the educational community and respect for common history**.

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An indomitable race towards the future

The General's message does not stop at condemnation: it becomes **a spur and encouragement for the entire Corps of the Bersaglieri**, which he defines as “a virtuous example for the entire society.”

“I am sure you will overcome this moment as well. The Bersaglieri, with their unmistakable run, have always been able to look ahead, overcoming every obstacle with an indomitable spirit.”

A declaration that becomes a symbol: **the Bersaglieri, yesterday protagonists of the Risorgimento and today actors of national and international security, embody Italy running forward, not yielding to ideological simplifications, proudly looking at its roots.**

Meloni and Crosetto: “Unacceptable and shameful”

Alongside General Portolano, the Prime Minister, **Giorgia Meloni**, and the Minister of Defense, **Guido Crosetto**, also took a stand. The Premier called the episode “**frankly unacceptable**”, reminding that “it is also thanks to the Bersaglieri that we have a nation today.” Crosetto spoke of “ideological prejudice” and reiterated that the Bersaglieri are **bearers of constitutional values** such as “freedom, equality, and democracy.”

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Beyond the plume, a lesson in civility

In difficult times for collective identity, the words of the Chief of Defense Staff represent much more than a military stance: they are **a lesson in civility, a call to educational and institutional responsibility**, an invitation not to lose the sense of what unites.

Because – as Portolano himself said – **there is nothing divisive in serving one's country with courage, discipline, and love.** On the contrary: that is where true citizenship is born. And the Bersaglieri, as always, will continue to run ahead of us.

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