



January 31, 2012

Mario Monti  
Prime Minister of Italy

Dear Mr. Monti,

Greetings from PETA. We have a creative proposal to help offset Italy's mounting budget problems—while at the same time honoring one of Italy's most revered figures and promoting PETA's cause. We'd like to offer the government US\$100,000 to erect a permanent, prominent sign at the international-arrivals area of Rome's Leonardo da Vinci Airport with da Vinci's image and the caption "Don't Be a Tomb for Animals: Go Vegetarian" (see attached artwork). Our goal is to assist Italy and highlight da Vinci's passionate, but seldom discussed, refusal to eat meat.

Leonardo da Vinci, who now appears on a U.S. postage stamp honoring his vegetarian lifestyle, wrote in *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*, "if you are as you have described yourself the king of the animals—it would be better for you to call yourself king of the beasts since you are the greatest of them all!—why do you not help them so that they may presently be able to give you their young in order to gratify your palate, for the sake of which you have tried to make yourself a tomb for all the animals?" Da Vinci would likely be even more disgusted by the modern meat industry, in which chickens, turkeys, pigs, cows, and fish are deprived of life as nature intended. They are packed into small cages, filthy sheds, or putrid fish farms for their entire lives. At the slaughterhouse, pigs, chickens, and cows often have their throats cut open while they are still conscious or are scalded to death or skinned alive.

Funded by an Italian-American PETA member, this sign would provide a small boost to Italy's economy, since the government provides significant funding for airport projects. We hope you will accept our sign proposal both for financial reasons and to commemorate the morals of the namesake of Rome's airport. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Dan Mathews  
Senior Vice President  
PETA

cc: Vito Riggio, President, Ente Nazionale per l'Aviazione Civile

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