

Cascais, 25 January 1960

Dear Vittorio,

as I told you last November in Cascais, and now that there has more and more talk in the last few days (leaped upon by the Italian and foreign press) of the likelihood of your marriage to Miss Dominique Claudel (rumours which can cause considerable damage to you, to me and to the entire family), I am writing to you to make perfectly sure that you are aware of the situation you would find yourself in if you were to marry Miss Claudel.

A situation which involves the laws of our House, in force for 29 generations and respected by 43 Heads of the Family, my predecessors, who have all succeeded in accordance with the Salic law through marriages contracted with the families of Sovereigns. As the 44th Head of the Family I have no intention, any more than I have the right, to change the law in spite of my affection for you. But even if I were to fail in my duty and proceed, it would be completely useless since nobody would be prepared to recognize the validity of my attempt.

As a consequence of your marriage to Miss Claudel you would be deprived of any right to succeed as Head of the House of Savoy and as pretender to the throne of Italy, losing your titles and rank and finding yourself reduced to the condition of a private citizen.

In so doing all your rights would immediately pass to my nephew, Amedeo the Duke of Aosta.

Such an irrevocable decision, which I would be forced to make with firmness and with pain, I would communicate to each and every member of our House, and to all the Sovereigns and Heads of the Royal families. It would likewise be made known to the Italians, especially in regard to the forfeiture of your present title of Prince of Naples.

In view of the affection I have for you and care for your happiness, I should like to hope that you will give your attention to the serious decisions of life, and particularly those which are definitive, since for me and for the religious traditions of our House matrimony is an indissoluble sacrament. Therefore the decision you make today will either open or close your prospects of succession to every right I possess.

An affectionate embrace,

Your Papa

P.S.: Since you are aware of all the elements for the decision you take, I would like you to be quite clear about what the consequences will be regarding your material inheritance; any consideration of a material character must of course come second to those of a moral character:

- I. By changing my present will my legacy will eventually be divided into equal parts between you and your sisters, since there would no longer be any reason for special treatment in your favour;
- II. The same obviously applies to any other source of income which through heredity, donation or any other cause of which you might in due course come into possession;
- III. Persons who have arranged to make you their sole heir as my successor have already communicated to me that they immediately intend to revoke their decision;
- IV. The Italian friends who have helped me over these difficult years have already given me to understand, quite firmly too though in a respectful form, that they would suspend any further transfer, and this would probably compel me to reduce your monthly cheque. Not to mention the serious damage this decision of our Italian friends would mean for your sisters.
- V. At the same time the eventual rights that I am entitled to as Head of the House, obviously could not be passed on to you.

Read and confirmed

Vittorio Emanuele di Savoia