

Report from Rome by Liliana Celani

National elections solved nothing

Disc jockeys and Isis cultists enter the Parliament, while Craxi nurtures his ambition to be a new Mussolini.

Following the national elections on June 14, Italy goes "back to the drawing board." Since no issues of substance were addressed by any of the parties during the electoral campaign, the only "good news," on which the international press seems to be concentrating, ignoring the dreadful state of the economy and the AIDS emergency, is that the Communist Party (PCI) lost heavily, going from 30.8% in the last national election in 1983 (in the Senate) to 28.3% now, and from 29.9% in the Chamber of Deputies to 26.6%. The PCI went back to the low level of 1963, and is losing ground continuously.

The "bad news" is the fact that the Green Party ran for the first time in national elections, and got 2.5% (13 seats) in the Chamber, and 2% in the Senate, establishing itself as a dangerous fifth column for Moscow's irregular warfare against Italy's nuclear power plants and military equipment, a factor of destabilization like the Greens in Germany.

Another indication of the perversion overtaking Italian politics, is the fact that for the first time a porno starlet, Ilona Staller, of Hungarian origin, known as "La Cicciolina" (Little Tubby), was elected into the Italian Parliament. La Cicciolina was at the center of attention of the Italian and foreign press, because her campaign consisted in distributing leaflets half-naked in front of Parliament, and doing election rallies dressed (or undressed) as Ishtar (the Whore of Babylon) of the Isis cult, which has apparently gained

enough followers to bring the whole freak show into Parliament.

Besides "La Cicciolina," a football player, a disc jockey, and a couple of showmen were elected to Parliament, indicating the level of *qualunquismo* (populism) reached with this electoral campaign.

Beyond the "multimedia show," the results of June 14 did nothing to solve the problem of the government vacuum which has plagued Italy for at least four years. Former Premier Bettino Craxi and his Socialist Party (PSI), which were pushing for early elections with the aim of destroying the Christian Democracy (DC) with a "landslide victory" of the lay parties, gained 3% more, but did not manage to force the Christian Democrats out of the picture.

The personal quarrel between Craxi and De Mita, general secretary of the DC, which also gained 2% in the Chamber, will therefore continue now that the PSI and DC will be forced to form another five-party government coalition, like the one which was dissolved when early elections were called.

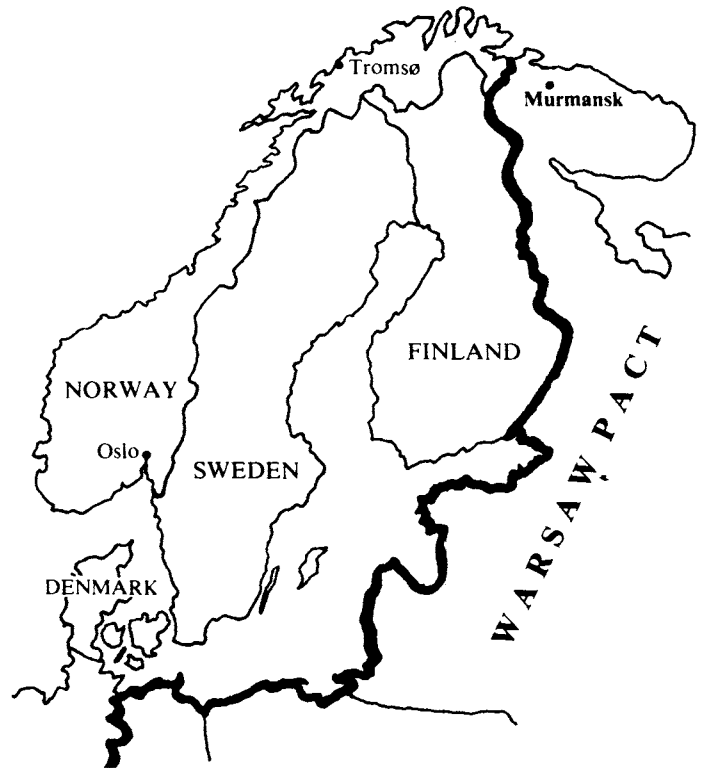
The focus of the negotiations for the formation of the new government, which will probably be postponed until September, will not be what can be done to stop the industrial and agricultural collapse in Italy, the AIDS emergency, drugs, and terrorism, but just what role should be played in this government by Craxi, who has never given up his ambition to become Italy's new Mussolini.

Craxi is accustomed to adopting tactical positions, such as his pro-Atlanticist stand at the beginning of his government tenure, which was transformed into a nationalistic, anti-American stand with the *Achille Lauro* hijacking affair. He began imitating President Reagan, with his talk about an "economic recovery," but the only purpose was to gain more power, and to go for a constitutional reform and a presidential system in Italy which would make him the unmovable *Duce*. The 3% vote increase he received in this election was mainly due to losses of the other lay parties, as Christian Democrat Clement Mastella indicated when he compared Craxi to Dante's Count Ugolino, who ate the flesh of his children in the Inferno in order to survive.

Mainly thanks to the protest vote of Italians who want no "left alternative" or the PCI, and to the role of the Vatican in calling on all Catholics to vote, the Christian Democracy did not lose, and went from 32.9% to 34.2% in the Chamber, and from 32.4% to 33.6% in the Senate, with a campaign mainly focused on defending the family and population growth. A number of DC candidates supported by the Schiller Institute in Italy, such as Maria Pia Garavaglia, who committed themselves to a crash program of public-health measures and research to stop the spread of AIDS, were elected with increased majorities.

Another Christian Democrat, Sen. Vincenzo Carollo, who had spoken at an event of the Schiller Institute on the need to fight the austerity conditionalities of the International Monetary Fund in Ibero-America as well as in Italy, did not run for re-election, but was dumped in a dirty operation in Sicily, which operation caused the DC to lose 5% of its votes in his area, where he enjoyed great popularity.

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*When in Tromsø,
see the town from above —
by the Cable Car!*