
Interview: Roberto Formigoni

'We are now in a new phase of Italian political life'

Roberto Formigoni, for many years chairman of Communion and Liberation, the biggest Catholic youth organization in Europe, and currently a member of the new Italian Parliament, was interviewed by Liliana and Claudio Celani on Aug. 27, the last day of the "Meeting" in Rimini, Italy, which is the yearly summer gathering of Communion and Liberation. Together with newly elected General Secretary Rocco Buttiglione, Formigoni is a leader of the Italian Popular Party (PPI), which had its first convention in Rome in July, and replaced the Christian Democratic party (DC) which had governed Italy for the last 40 years. Formigoni is also chairman of the European section of the International Parliamentarians Against Genocide in Bosnia, as well as one of the thousands of signers of the Schiller Institute call to stop the Sept. 5-13 U.N. genocide conference in Cairo, Egypt. (For a more complete profile of Italian political parties, see EIR, Feb. 4, 1994, p. 35.)

EIR: At the first convention of the Italian Popular Party (PPI), which took place in Rome last July, the line which won was the one supported by you. How will the PPI present itself at the reopening of the Italian Parliament in September? Will it aim at rebuilding a single Catholic party, or will it just fight for Christian values to be reflected in politics and society?

Formigoni: Definitely the second perspective. The single Catholic party was an important phase in Italian political life, which will have to be reconsidered because some current judgments are very ungenerous, but it is not the perspective for tomorrow. We are in a new phase of Italian political life; we chose "bipolarismo" [a bipolar political system] and for us Catholics the issue is to be present everywhere that it is possible to defend the values of man, the rights of the individual, of the family, of freedom, pluralism in the economic field, in business, in culture, social work, solidarity, peace and justice in an international perspective.

As to the work inside the Popular Party: We won in the convention, defeating the left wing of the PPI precisely on this perspective, and, therefore, we are trying to reconstruct a center alliance in order to avoid a bipolar system in Italy

between an extreme left wing and an extreme right wing.

EIR: Does this center alliance you are talking about also imply the possible entrance of the PPI into the Italian government, and if so, on what conditions?

Formigoni: Only under specific conditions. I start with a historical consideration: The bipolar system in Italy was born prematurely, in a rushed way, and as a result of this we do not have today a modern bipolar system; we have a bipolar system between two poles which also include the extreme wings. We have to bring the political axis of the moderate pole at which we are looking, toward the center rather than the right wing. This means we must support the evolution toward the center of important political forces, such as Forza Italia, the [Northern] League, and National Alliance itself (which currently form the Berlusconi government) making sure, for example, that National Alliance loses part of its nostalgic [Mussolinian] components and becomes, if it gets cleaned up, the right wing of a center pole. This is the perspective for which the PPI is working. As to the political content of this center pole, it's the one I talked about before, from the rights of the individual to the issue of democratic institutions.

EIR: Reading the *Washington Post* or other American or British newspapers, the reader has the impression that in Italy there is a fight between judges who fight corruption and politicians who try to defend it. Reality is a little bit more complex. For example, in the last few days, the head of the League, which had supported the judges until now, suddenly came out attacking their "Mani Pulite" (Clean Hands) investigation, and spoke of foreign influences in it. How would you explain the recent Italian developments, including the government crisis?

Formigoni: It is certainly a complex situation, and you have to keep in mind a number of factors. Certainly, Italian politics had a significant degree of corruption, and the investigation by the magistrates also aimed at eliminating this corruption. But I emphasize the "also." It was not only this, because the judges moved particularly against the corruption of old

government parties, practically ignoring the corruption of opposition parties on the left, and particularly the Communist Party (PDS). I would say that the infiltration of left forces, particularly the PCI-PDS, into the Judiciary branch in the last 30 years became so heavy that we can speak of a political attitude of the judiciary power also toward important parties of the present government who, however, are wrong in playing the victim: [Northern League head Umberto] Bossi is wrong when he says that the investigations of the judges are aimed against him. I would not exclude that there are foreign influences (definitely not the intervention of the CIA which Bossi is talking about) and one can certainly say that the action of the judiciary in Italy has to be understood in the context of a complicated international situation. However, in the case of Bossi's movement, wrongdoings were found which had to be punished.

EIR: Do you think that Bossi was referring to a CIA intervention against the League?

Formigoni: Sure. You see, Bossi finds himself in a difficult position. He is the head of a movement which, according to the latest polls, only has 4% of the vote, but he has 20% of the seats in the new Parliament, thanks to a very advantageous agreement he made with Berlusconi, and he has maybe 40% of the power in Italy. In order to justify this enormous power that he has in his hands, he has to constantly invent plots, to attack his adversaries (typical is his demonization campaign against the PPI) in an attempt to keep this balance of power in which he has a privileged place, from being altered. It's all political reasoning which has little to do with reality.

EIR: Contradicting the official historiography, the general secretary of the PPI, Rocco Buttiglione, recently wrote in the Italian daily *La Repubblica* that Italy and the United States have common constitutional roots in the Christian tradition, and that the true American soul is anti-Enlightenment. He said that, in this sense, he prefers the American Revolution of [first U.S. Treasury Secretary Alexander] Hamilton to the French Revolution. Do you think this conception allows a new transatlantic cooperation between Europe and the United States?

Formigoni: Certainly, and on the new basis of a reunification of the histories of our countries beyond the official historiography, which is dominated by the Marxist culture and, in the United States, by a "radical-liberal" culture which is anti-religious and anti-humanistic. I was always a convinced supporter of friendly relations between the Italian and the American people and of the need to value the popular roots of our countries, taking some influence away from those lobbies and power groups which have very little to do with the true history of our countries.

EIR: A question on the recent shift in American politics with the visit of President Clinton in Europe and his speech at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin: Clinton abandoned the

"special relation" with Great Britain, assigning Germany a special role in Europe. Do you think that this shift will have a positive effect on Europe and on Italy?

Formigoni: I would like to welcome this shift with a "finally!" Finally, our American friends realized that Europe is not the little sister of Great Britain, is not a protectorate, but a continent inhabited by hundreds of millions of people with different cultures, different religions, and different traditions. I would like to interpret this new relationship toward Germany as giving greater attention to continental Europe, where there is not only Germany, but also France, Italy, and other important components. The fact that the United States is no longer just pro-British but also pro-European in a complete way, is a very important step forward and I hope that we will proceed in this direction.

EIR: At Corfu, Naples, and other European summits, there was some discussion about the so-called Delors plan for full employment in Europe, a White Paper which takes its name from Jacques Delors, the former president of the European Commission. The White Paper proposed infrastructure development projects echoing the Paris-Berlin-Vienna "Productive Triangle" infrastructure plan proposed by American economist Lyndon LaRouche in 1989. Is the Delors plan being discussed also in Italy?

Formigoni: Yes, it is being discussed, because the plague of unemployment is hitting Italy as well as the rest of Europe. The Delors plan is one of the attempts to give structural answers. Unfortunately, it is not sufficient. The problem of unemployment, which was recently discussed also at the Detroit summit, is a structural problem with deep roots. It is necessary to create new sources of work, new sources of wealth, but certainly the Delors plan opens new important perspectives; it's being discussed, and I find it important and agree with it.

EIR: Over the last year in Italy, a new current of geopolitical thought emerged, which has representatives also inside the Berlusconi government, which presupposes an Italian foreign policy navigating in the midst of unsolvable conflicts. It no longer, for example, envisions a role for Italy in the Mediterranean as a bridge between two cultures, but as a *Limes*, a fortified border, between two antagonistic worlds. Considering problems such as Islamic fundamentalism (mainly due to underdevelopment), the criminal U.N. policy to reduce the world population, and also the perspectives opened up by the peace plan in the Middle East, how do you see this current of geopolitical thought?

Formigoni: I do not agree with it, because it is a negation, or at least a strong limitation, of the role Italy used to play, in its geographic position, and not only in the course of its modern history, as a bridge between different cultures and different worlds: We are fully European but also fully Mediterranean. I find that generally the western world, including

Europe, underestimates the problems of the Arab world. It tends to misinterpret phenomena such as Islamic fundamentalism, and the Islamic religion itself, in a risky way for our continent and for the West. We need a profound revolution in the way we look at these phenomena, the ability to engage in dialogue, to open relations, to think in broad terms, of integration between Europe and the Arab world.

EIR: Very much linked to this is the issue of the U.N. Cairo conference. You are among the many signers of the Schiller Institute call to stop the Cairo conference. On this issue, there is a true war of information. The British malthusian Conor Cruise O'Brien accused the Vatican, for example, of creating an unholy alliance with Muslims to defeat the Cairo conference. On the other side, U.S. Vice President Al Gore (as have President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher) just gave assurances that the U.S. position will be to defend national sovereignty on the issue of family planning. What role will Italy play at the Cairo conference, with its delegation head, Family Minister Antonio Guidi, and how do you see the American position? Is there a rapprochement between the Vatican and Clinton?

Formigoni: Italy can play a very important role. I am speaking to you from the Rimini Meeting, where Family Minister Guidi came two days ago to outline the fundamental policy guidelines of the Italian position at the Cairo conference. It will be a position giving great attention to the issue of economic development and population, not in the sense of limiting freedom and imposing a ferocious birth control policy, but in the sense of helping the Third World to develop and support individual responsibility. I think this is the right position. I do not see anything wrong in a convergence between Christians and Muslims on these positions, which I believe are positions of freedom and responsibility.

The attitude held until now by the American delegation frankly surprised me, because it contradicts the most profound inspiration of the American people. I see it as a position strongly influenced by powerful economic lobbies and ideologies, but foreign to the true tradition of the American people. Maybe there are some openings in the statements of the last hours. If there are, I hope these openings will increase, otherwise it will be a clash, and it would not help anybody.

EIR: This year the Meeting in Rimini was entitled "God's People on Its Way." Is this an answer to the false alternative between globalism and nationalism (in a chauvinistic sense) which is being offered by the lay world?

Formigoni: Yes, but not that alone. The theme of the people is dear to us, dear to all cultures which have a religious inspiration and are particularly attentive to the theme of popular identity, national identity, religious identity, which does not exclude, on the contrary it founds, a perspective which is not abstractly globalistic, but comunitary of cooperation, solidarity. I think this is the right perspective.

London plots for technocracy to take over Italy

by Claudio Celani

A powerful faction in the City of London is plotting to overthrow the current Italian government, to replace it with a technocratic cabinet able to push through the most severe budget cuts and tax increases in Italy's postwar history. The London faction includes the George Soros and Warburg interests, as well as other groups represented by the *Financial Times*. This is the faction which in mid-August provoked a financial crisis that precipitated a drop in the value of the Italian currency, the lira, to an historic low of 1,023 against the German mark, and which is planning to repeat that assault on a larger scale, with the goal of bringing the lira down to 1,200 to the deutschemark.

Such a scenario was outlined by David Roche in an interview with the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera*. Roche, a former employee of the Morgan Stanley investment bank, has now built his own corporation and is one of Britain's most influential financial analysts. He predicted that Italy, along with Sweden, will face a severe financial crisis in September and will be out of the European Union by December. As an attempt to avoid that, Roche suggests that both countries will take extremely unpopular measures to bring their state deficits under control.

The dimensions of such measures have been provided by Carlo De Benedetti, the Italian financier allied to Soros who, at the end of August in an interview with his newspaper *La Repubblica*, called for a combined package of budget cuts and tax increases of at least \$62 billion. Such an austerity program, more than double what the present Berlusconi government reluctantly is trying to implement, would be the most severe in the last 50 years.

It looks as though the City of London is trying to direct the first waves of the coming financial collapse onto the "weak flanks" of Italy and Sweden—Central Europe being their strategic target. As Lyndon LaRouche commented in an interview on Aug. 17, "George Soros has moved as the key player who brought about the destabilization of the Swedish krona and the Italian lira, who is making a major attack on the German mark. This is all run from London, and the purpose is to destabilize Clinton's working treaty partner, [Chancellor Helmut] Kohl of Germany."

To ensure the possibility of looting of Italy's resources, the City of London is planning to overthrow the present