

Bretton Woods Drive In Italy Irks Brits

by Claudio Celani

As *EIR* has reported in recent weeks, Lyndon LaRouche's intervention in Italy has provoked an intense debate on the collapse of the global financial system, and on the need for government policies committed to the general welfare and a new Bretton Woods. The protagonist of this debate is former Finance Minister Giulio Tremonti, who publicly debated such ideas with LaRouche last year in Rome, and endorses LaRouche's proposals for a Eurasian Land-Bridge policy. An election campaign is finally dominated by real and important issues.

The paradox is that Tremonti is a leader of the conservative bloc around former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who is again running for that post in the April 13-14 general elections. Tremonti's campaign against globalization and for a new Bretton Woods international financial agreement has received more endorsements from members of the Democratic Party and the Left-Rainbow than from his own party! Such a disruption of the old "left-right" alignments is not only positive, it is the precondition to bust up the system through which the British empire has controlled Italian politics for three decades, since the assassination of Aldo Moro in 1978.

There is a real possibility that a grand coalition will be formed, in which politicians, and not London-directed technocrats, will run the government. In such a coalition, Tremonti has already been designated to be Minister of the Economy. This has enraged London, which has mobilized its puppets and agents of influence to try to stop such developments.

One member of the current Italian government who endorses Tremonti's proposals is Undersecretary of State for the Economy and Finance Mario Lettieri. He has helped expand the dialogue by supporting LaRouche's "Firewall" proposal. [See the accompanying interview.]

On the opposite side, the British empire has attacked Tremonti through its mouthpiece, the Acton Institute, with a piece on March 18. It has also unleashed a prominent party colleague of Tremonti, former Defense Minister Antonio Martino, to demand that Tremonti not be appointed economic czar in the next government!

Martino attacked Tremonti in an interview with the daily *La Stampa* on March 27: "I am not at all enthusiastic that the PdL [Berlusconi's party] goes to the government with such an economic superminister," Martino said. He then proposed to split the responsibilities of the Economics Ministry, to reduce Tremonti's power. Currently, the departments of Treasury, Finance, and Budget are joined under the Economics Ministry. Martino insists that "we must split the Finance department

from the Treasury department. As for the rest, I keep thinking that defending protectionism is wrong and absurd. To propose it again today, is like reproducing the same mistakes made before the 1929 crisis.”

The interviewer challenged Martino about the U.S. government bailout of “investment” bank Bear Stearns, asking if it is not a state intervention and an example of “the world upside down,” as Tremonti says. “Absolutely no,” Martino said. He went on to defend Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke: “The Fed does what it did not do in 1929, when it let 30% of U.S. banks fail.”

As for the Acton Institute, Bernd Bergmann writes on the Institute powerblog that, “Tremonti blames the recent rise in the prices of consumer goods on globalization, and says that this is only the beginning. The global financial crisis, environmental destruction, and geopolitical tensions in the competition for natural resources are also fruits of globalization, according to Tremonti. He identifies the main problem as a lack of international governance of the process of globalization, and calls for a new Bretton Woods-like system to confront the multiple crises caused by what he calls ‘marketism.’”

Ignoring the demise of the globalized system, Bergmann writes, “Tremonti’s vision is inward-looking and profoundly pessimistic. Some market-oriented Italian commentators have pointed out that his ideas seem dangerously close to old-style protectionism. It is clear if Europe followed his analysis, it would be led on a path of future irrelevance both as an economic and a cultural model.”