



Mario ("Beddu"!) - Lifetime Vicar of the Rich and Powerful - Hammers the Italian Working Class

Tom Verso (March 22, 2012)



OMG! When these two put their heads together – worker’s heads roll! Emma Marcegaglia: "We're in a situation now where permanent jobs no longer exist-- and we must acknowledge that."

On November 9, 2011, Italian President Giorgio Napolitano appointed Mario Monti a “Lifetime Senator”. A “Lifetime Senator” is one that is appointed rather than elected. (Judith Harris, i-Italy’s



Berlusconi watcher, refers to Monti as a “neo-Senator” e.g. 11/15/11. I can’t find a definition of neo-Senator, but it seems “Lifetime Senator” is more accurate.) Subsequently, Italy’s President asked Monti to become the Prime Minister.

Note: Scuttlebutt has it, after being appointed a Senator and then the Prime Minister, Mario was heard walking around humming a 1950’s American rock tune: “I’m in with the in-crowd”

The fact that he was appointed a Senator, rather than elected by the people, and then de facto appointed the Prime Minister is significant in terms of democracy and worker’s standard of living. The Italian people have forgone their right to choose their own government and are suffering a reduction in Standard of Living. So what’s all the journalistic ink about Berlusconi scandals? Is there any greater scandal than taking the democratic rights of the people away and reducing their standard of living?

When people give up their right to an elected government, it may be worthwhile if they benefit economically. Well you didn’t hear this from a Rome correspondent, so take it with a “grain of salt”. There’s this guy in London with a gang of business journalistic credentials who seems to think the Italian people are getting hammered by the non-elected Monti government.

Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, who has covered politics and economics for 30 years and currently the International Business Editor for “The Telegraph”, writes:

“I wish premier Mario Monti all the best. He is one of Europe’s great gentlemen (“everyone loves Mario” - verso). Yet I fail to see how his labour reforms can pull the country out of its downward slide. Mr Monti is carrying out a draconian fiscal squeeze in the midst of deep slump, even though Italy is close to primary budget surplus... The IMF is aghast at what is happening... The IMF now expects Italy’s economy to contract this year, and to keep contracting into 2013.” (emp.+)

“IMF is aghast ! It’s not like the IMF is a pro-labor organization. So Italy has a “primary budget surplus” but Mario thinks Italy’s problem is with workers, who created the surplus, and what is needed is a change in labor laws. Bloomberg reports on 3/12/12:

Monti Targets Italy Labor Law Revamp... Riccardo Coladarci, a firefighter in Rome for seven years, is trapped and says now it’s time for him to be saved. His temporary job contract doesn’t offer sick days or vacation and pays about 9,000 euros (\$12,000) a year, barely enough to make ends meet in Italy.

“I’m not even entitled to a flame-resistant shirt,” the 29-year-old Rome resident said about his employment agreement.

So call me “Pollyanna” if you will; but can’t some of the “surplus” Pritchard cited above be used to buy the man a shirt?

One thing can be said for sure: Monti is consistent. He has spent his life in the company of the rich and powerful (Schooled at Bocconi and Yale, former rector of Bocconi, adviser to Goldman Sachs, officer of Trilateral Commission and Bildesburg), and he still serves them well! He relentlessly drives for changes in labor laws that **reduce the rights and standard of living of workers**

and **increases the wealth of the rich and powerful**. Yahoo Business News reports on 3/18/12:

“Monti has been widely praised for improving market confidence in Italy, which was teetering on the brink of a Greek-style debt crisis when he took office four months ago.

However, according to Tito Boeri, economics professor at Bocconi:

“The current reform draft, leaves all temporary contracts in place and the planned overhaul of welfare benefits would still leave thousands of people with no income support...”

So wealth in “the markets” is increasing. At the same time as the Italian working class standard of living is decreasing. The Italian working class is finding out that giving up rights to electing a government is a “slippery slope”. After elections go, then worker’s rights go, and then comes a reduction in standard of living.

But, Hey! The news is not all bad. After all, Mario is a lovable guy and the previous girl-chasing Prime Minister is gone. That’s good! ... No?

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