

EU's Fascist Policy For Italy Hits a Snag

by Claudio Celani

Jan. 7—European Union (EU) official language is Orwellian, in which white means black, peace means war, and growth means decay. EU puppet Mario Monti, the technocrat who leads the “accountants government” in Italy, provides a perfect example.

Monti named his first austerity package the “Salva Italia” (Save Italy) bill, whereby not Italy, but the euro was meant to be saved. He has now announced a second package, called “Crescitalia” (Grow Italy), where again it is not the nation of Italy that is to grow, but rather, the income of the financial markets.

The new package is part of the program set by the European Central Bank (ECB) last August, in the now-famous confidential letter sent by ECB head Mario Draghi and former ECB chief Jean-Claude

Trichet to the Italian government. No money should be spent for investments, and “growth” should be achieved by reducing costs. Thus, the new package is to include a reform of labor laws, and deregulation and liberalization of “closed shop” professions, such as pharmacists, notaries, lawyers, and taxi drivers.

This prescription for Italy—as well as for Greece, which is further down the line toward destruction—will only worsen the economic, financial, and social crisis. It will push Italy, Europe’s third-largest economy, even closer to a financial blowout that could explode the entire euro system any day now—and thereby further crush the population.

Resistance Emerges

But Monti has run into some snags.

Before Christmas, the national taxi drivers’ union, Uritaxi, won a preliminary victory against the deregulation and liberalization plans of the Monti government, after Claudio Giudici, the head of Uritaxi in Tuscany, and an activist in the Italian LaRouche movement, Movisol, immediately started a huge nationwide mobilization. As soon as it became public that Monti was planning the liberalization of the taxi industry, taxis in the



Movisol

Claudio Giudici, right, an activist with Movisol, the Italian LaRouche movement, heads the Tuscany section of Uritaxi, the national taxi-drivers union, which has gone on strike against the austerity demands of the EU. Shown: taxis lined up on a street in Rome.

largest Italian cities went on strike, and the technocratic government had to immediately retract the plan. Because it's expected that the plan will crop up again soon, the taxi drivers are currently mobilizing a national "Operation Truth," to win the support of the entire population.

"Operation Truth" has started with a national leaflet (see box) handed out to taxi customers throughout the country, and with a large ad to appear soon in major national newspapers.

Significantly, the London *Financial Times* published an article Dec. 29 expressing its disgust with the fact that the City of London's champion Monti, who defeated Microsoft, was defeated by, of all things, Italian taxi drivers! Then, on Jan. 1, the Rome correspondent for the *FT*, Guy Dinmore, under the headline "Powerful lobbies put the brakes on Monti's reforms," reported on a letter to the editor by Giudici, which he had drafted as an answer to the Dinmore article. The *FT* didn't publish the letter to the editor, but Dinmore quoted Giudici defending opposition to the liberalization plan as a "passionate struggle by forces of a truly democratic opposition against converting Italy from a republican to an oligarchical state."

On Jan. 4, the Italian financial daily *Il Sole 24 Ore* also printed the *FT* article.

The Letter of Protest

On Jan. 5, Giudici received an e-mail from the editor of the *Financial Times*, who announced that his "powerful and eloquent letter" would be published in full. The next day, the following appeared in the newspaper:

"Monti will be defeated by democracy, truth, and conscience, more than by taxi drivers!

"Sir,

"In reference to Mr. Giugliano's article of Dec. 29 ('Monti needs more than Europe's cheers to hold Rome'), what is being described as 'resistance' by a system of 'closed shop professions'—is more properly viewed as the passionate effort by forces engaged in an actual democratic resistance against the transformation of Italy from a republic into an oligarchical state. Before they are workers—taxi drivers, pharmacists, newsvendors, shopkeepers—before being workers, they are citizens who still enjoy voting rights, and who put pressure on a system which—despite the 'freezing' of the constitutional process of selection of the Prime Minister by a series of national and international forces—is still centered around Parliament and voting rights which these persons still enjoy. This is the primary obstacle to a neo-liberal blueprint aiming at putting the country—with its economic, productive and distributive expressions, both state-owned and shared among a multitude of citi-

Taxi Drivers Tell Monti: No Gifts to Financial Sharks!

The time has come to respond to the usual lies spread against us, aiming to present consumers with a completely distorted scenario, in order to make the financial sharks' entry into the sector palatable, something which is currently impossible.

The Italian economy does not need to eliminate regulations through liberalization and gifts to the banks; to the contrary it needs to again implement those rules which are able to tie the hands of finance, which today dominates everything and everyone, and *prevents the real development of the*

physical economy!

Today's paradox is that the "Professor Governments" are the same ones which created the global crisis with their recipes, and created the euro as a "test" currency, a currency doomed to fail because it ignores the real needs of people. Why have Argentina, China, and Russia, economies currently looking confidently toward the future, rediscovered the policies of the great American President Franklin Delano Roosevelt?

Roosevelt rescued us from Nazism, and first subjected financial sharks to strict regulations (the Glass-Steagall Act and the Bretton Woods Agreement). Here, instead, the [euro governments] insist on giving away entire economic sectors to those insatiable predators who orchestrate wars among the poor—and possibly also among peoples!

zens—in the hands of a financial oligarchy which has dominated the nation at least since 1992.

“The second obstacle faced by Mr. Monti is truth. All the above-mentioned citizen-workers groups are mobilizing to make it clear to their fellow-citizens that the current media campaign is not truthful. Since most television and radio talk-shows do not allow, or severely limit a real debate, union organizations and single workers have established a real parallel information system by using the social network, leaflets and word-of-mouth advertising.

“The third and last obstacle faced by Monti is represented by that properly human ontological quality called conscience. This is the sea where the River of Truth finds its mouth: it finds it in a few members of Parliament, in some journalists, in many citizens.

“Therefore, it is not some magical power by taxi-drivers have that is stopping Mr. Monti, but this mix of democracy, truth, and conscience which is keeping the country still safe from ultimately falling in the hands of financial sharks!

“Claudio Giudici

“Chairman

“Uritaxi (national taxi-drivers union),

“Tuscany region”

The *Financial Times* editors, however, had cut seven decisive words, which incriminated their masters, the City of London. Giudici had written that oligarchical forces “have dominated Italy since 1992 (the year of the famous ‘Britannia’ deals).” The crucial words in the parentheses were omitted.

The “Britannia” deals are well known in Rome and London as the deals made on board the British royal yacht *Britannia*, on June 2, 1992, among City of London bankers and pro-British Italian businessmen, financiers, and civil servants. The most famous participant in that meeting was then-Italian Treasury Minister Mario Draghi.

Indeed, the ECB program being implemented in Italy now by Monti has been described as “Britannia II” by many commentators.

Monti Forges Ahead

Phase Two of Monti’s program, which has been cynically sold as a growth program “at no cost,” has already begun: Since Jan. 2, all limitations have been removed on the hours shops can remain open. In the



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Prime Minister Mario Monti, London’s man in Italy, has been set back on his heels by the Italian taxi drivers, who are challenging his “reforms.”

future, any business can stay open ’round the clock.

Regional governments are strongly resisting this. The governments of Tuscany, Piedmont, and Apulia have announced they will bring a constitutional complaint. The Venice region has instructed the state police to levy fines on all the shopkeepers who accept this decree, and the Latium region (where Rome is located) has set a meeting with the shopkeepers and their unions.

Monti and his financial supporters had better get used to such a response. He has been counting on blind support from the national political parties, who heretofore have been cowed by the blackmail of the financial markets and the EU. However, a strong response is emerging from the citizenry, and from local authorities, labor unions, and representatives of the real economy in general. Over the past year, in fact, a significant portion of the Italian population has awoken to the fact that the euro system is being used to bleed the country to death, rather than lead it towards economic growth and cooperation as originally promised.