

On What Does Italy's Future Depend?

Signora Presotto, an independent jurist, president of the National Civic Confederation, and chairwoman of the electoral list Si Siamo Italia in the upcoming national elections in Italy, addressed the Schiller Institute conference on Nov. 24. Her speech (slightly abridged here), was presented in Italian, and dubbed in English; it is available on the Schiller Institute [website](#).

Nineteen years after the establishment of the European Union, with the introduction of the subsequent Treaties, and also the abrogation of the Glass-Steagall Act in 1999 (which, from 1933 to that date, had provided protection from financial speculation), the scenario at the European level is, to say the least, disastrous.

Italy has seen its democracy and liberty taken away, against its will.

First, with the signing of the EU Treaties. In fact, articles 10 and 11 of the Italian Constitution allow limits to be placed on sovereignty only for purposes of peace, while there is no possibility of “transfer of sovereignty.”

It follows that the signing of all of the treaties of the European Union should have been subjected to popular referenda, and thus the signing of those Treaties represents an illegitimate act by a political class that betrayed its people and its mandate.

All of this took place with the complete silence of the media and the press, accomplices of a political ruling class that lacks any

moral scruples or love for its country.

The elections of 2008, which were very difficult for the country, saw the victory of the center-right bloc, whose leader Silvio Berlusconi formed the government that was to lead the country for the five-year period from 2008 to 2013.

Berlusconi's biggest mistake, in my view, was that he didn't tell the Italians the truth about what actually took place: the signing by the previous center-left governments of the binding Treaties of the European Union.

I think that the Prime Minister made the grave mistake of underestimating his political adversaries, and above all, of underestimating the power wielded by the leaders of Europe.

The Berlusconi government was born under an unlucky star, and the financial crisis that began in the United States hit Europe and Italy like a storm, starting in the initial months of the new government's term.

The continuous, unstoppable advance of the crisis created harsh conflicts in civil society and in the Parliament, between the two political poles.

In the meantime, the country's real economy was



EIRNS/Christopher Lewis

Lorella Presotto leads an Italian political movement based in Florence, which is running candidates for Parliament, and has placed Glass-Steagall and an end to all the anti-national-sovereignty EU treaties at the top of its program.

in serious danger. It was at that point in time that the small and medium-sized enterprises began to suffer greatly, and many closed down.

This was also due to the fact that the banks provided less and less credit in the market.

The Economic Crisis Hits Italy

In particular, between the end of 2009 and the beginning of 2011, the weight of the economic crisis was felt. The closure of many companies wiped out numerous jobs, impoverishing a large sector of the population.

Although social shock absorbers were implemented, this was not sufficient to stop the Italian recession, which appeared in its harshest form at the beginning of 2011.

The strong position of [German Chancellor] Angela Merkel and some of her allies, in favor of a strict budget policy, led to various clashes with the heads of government of other countries, including Italy.

The fact is, that at a certain point, the European Union imposed the replacement of the democratically elected Berlusconi government with the technocratic government of Mario Monti, appointed by the oligarchy.

Italian public opinion had been stunned in the previous months by a series of carefully manipulated actions and responses from the markets, and thus it welcomed the Monti government as “the solution to the problem.”

This perverse mechanism of “inducement” leads us to an initial, troubling reflection: a continent that came out of two World Wars, that had succeeded in establishing constitutional democracies, saw its democratic rights and basic laws violated in various forms. . . .

What is worse, is that these choices, which were entirely arbitrary, were driven by deceit, behind the backs of the European populations.



CGIL

“From the beginning of its oligarchical mandate, the Monti government began to raise taxes and cut spending in all primary sectors, directly affecting the weakest sectors of the population and the middle class in particular, which now no longer exists in Italy,” Presotto charged. Here, a CGIL union protest against attacks on pensions. The sign reads: “Workers without jobs or pension (esodati) . . . in search of a future.”

No man or woman of this continent, since the Maastricht Treaty, has *ever* had the right to make a choice.

Everything has always been decided artificially, by a high-level power with the complicity of the ruling class, which acts simply as the servants of financial interests and multinational corporations, which have decided to enrich themselves to the detriment of the European populations, robbing them of all of their wealth.

Coming back to the Italian situation specifically, from the beginning of its oligarchical mandate, the Monti government began to raise taxes and cut spending in all primary sectors, directly affecting the weakest sectors of the population and the middle class in particular, which now no longer exists in Italy.

What is certain—and this is a fact, not abstract conjecture—is that today, my country, Italy, is currently experiencing the darkest season of its life; not even the period of reconstruction after World War II can be compared to the social and economic disaster that today darkens my beloved land.

The welfare state is being dismantled: Funds for disabilities and people who are not self-sufficient have been cut; hospital beds, health and social services. In

some schools, students will attend school in freezing rooms, without heat, because their school is unable to pay electricity costs. In the name of the “necessary deregulation” to cover debts, created on purpose by criminal international speculation, the public goods that our forefathers had left to us have been almost entirely sold off.

Essential services, drinking water, and electricity are affected by unsustainable costs, that an increasing number of families can no longer pay.

Procedures for evictions and debt collection flood all of the civil courts. Many families live in cars, or makeshift lodgings. The segment of the population that is poor, indigent, has reached the historical level of almost 4 million people [out of a population of about 60 million—ed.]. Taxation has reached the highest level in the world, and the tax offices, the armed wing of the Monti government, seize everything they can, even from pensioners and families without income, thus exponentially increasing the number of the homeless.

In just this year, 2012, the number of Italians who were forced to eat free meals at the cafeterias run by the Caritas association or other volunteer groups increased by 9% (source: Coldiretti analysis).

To be precise, there are 3,686,942 Italians who must get food through non-profit organizations.

In 2010, the figure was 2.7 million; in 2011, 3.3 million; and in 2012, now almost 3.7 million (analysis conducted in collaboration with AGEA—the Agency for Agriculture Disbursements).

According to Coldiretti, the agriculture producers association, one out of four Italian families has economic difficulties, an increase of 3% over last year; 48% of Italians think that their situation is going to get worse. Fifty-one percent of families say that they are only able to cover their expenses, without any additional luxuries; 8% of families do not even have an income to cover what is indispensable.

In addition to a welfare state that has been eliminated, the state has become inhuman, we see an economy on its knees, which lacks the oxygen of liquidity and credit.

The End of Glass-Steagall

The abrogation of the Glass-Steagall Act in the U.S., and the legislative obligation created by the European Union to be listed on the stock market, have made all of

our commercial banks the prey of the speculative lobby. Once on the market, they are exposed to the raids of ruthless speculators, who acquire controlling interests, and have forced them to change their activities, making them subtract more and more credit from the real economy, from enterprises and families.

Without access to credit, small and medium-sized enterprises, the heart of the Italian real economy, have closed their doors one by one, and hundreds of thousands of jobs have been lost in a few years.

The food and agriculture sector has not been different.

Agriculture was our leading sector, our pride, our sense of belonging, handed down to us from our Roman ancestors.

The European Union has forced us to accept specific rules on production, our farmers have to throw products away because they are prohibited from putting more than a certain quota onto the market—a limit established by the European oligarchy.

We Italians accepted these harsh rules, thinking they were necessary to build a union of peoples. But now the goal is clear: to rid the Italian market of the small, high-quality producers, and make room for the multinational corporations which have invaded us with GMOs [genetically modified organisms], products that are often made with low-quality ingredients, that sometimes are even toxic for human health.

Their program:

- Bring back poverty, hunger, and desperation, in order to have low-cost labor always available.
- Generate diseases, because in turn, the multinational companies—the pharmaceuticals, for example—can distribute their products more broadly.

The goal is always the same: Enrich the 1% of the global population to the detriment of the other 99%.

It is a complex situation, with a thousand facets, that requires many national and international players to be effective.

A pyramid of power was built up consciously by the financial lobby, with its base consisting of the current European political system.

Dividi et Impera

Mario Monti, Angela Merkel, and all of their European colleagues, are pawns controlled by a power that manipulates and violates all of the equilibria of life and society.

Through the manipulation of media and the press, and the use of clichés, they are trying to set one people against another, and even to create internecine battles within each people.

Angela Merkel is very good at this. She is able to make the peoples of southern Europe—Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal—appear as bearers of disasters that harm the peoples of northern Europe and Germany.

This leads the German people to believe that that the Latin populations of Europe are lazy and wasteful, and create debt.

This is not true at all. It is a stratagem, and the use of trickery carried out to fragment the strength of the European peoples, who together strike fear in those who wish to keep their power at all costs.

Some months ago, [IMF director] Christine Lagarde said: I don't care if Greek children are going hungry; their parents have to pay their taxes!¹

Greece, the cradle of civilization, of democracy, which gave birth to Socrates and Aristotle, is reduced to misery by imbalances created on purpose by legal monstrosities such as the Lisbon Treaty and the ESM!

Fathers and mothers in Greece are now forced to leave their children in orphanages, because they can no longer support them.

The same plan is being attempted in Italy, Spain, and Portugal, with the consent of the public opinion of Germany and the other peoples of northern Europe.

We want to tell the peoples of northern Europe that “Angela Merkel is deceiving you! She herself is working for the plan that will not stop with the so-called PIIGS [Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece, Spain] countries, but will be implemented in Germany as well, and in all the other countries of northern Europe.”

We Italians understand this; and although we detest Angela Merkel with all our strength, we still cherish the dream of seeing a true union of peoples, based on solidarity, brotherhood, the wealth of diverse cultures, the centrality of the human being, as a single species.

I am a woman like many others: I have a family and a profession. Until now, I never thought I would have to join the Agora of politics.

My sense of civic duty and responsibility towards future generations, the suffering I see around me, the arrogance and abuse by a European ruling class that

acts on a common denominator that harms my people—which is not only the Italian people, because I feel European—have not allowed me to turn my attention elsewhere.

Many new political movements and non-party electoral lists have sprouted up in Italy, and for these new popular forces, right and left no longer exist; human beings exist, along with a State that is seen as an aggregate of a people, a body with shared rules that recognizes all of those rights that the doctrine of natural law defines as “unfailing and unavoidable.”

I have made myself available, with all of my knowledge, and, with many other good-willed people, I have begun moving forward on this path, which I feel is right.

I am aware of how difficult it will be, of the many obstacles we will all meet, because power, that at the top of the pyramid, doesn't want people to progress, doesn't want liberty and well-being for them. Power wants only one thing: *dividi et impera*, divide and conquer. It will unleash its best servants, muddy the waters, fish in troubled waters in order to re-establish feudal power.

An Invisible War

It is no secret that the current Italian political class, of any persuasion (right, left, or center), is trying to pass a reform of the electoral system, to raise the threshold of votes to enter the Parliament and also increase the majority premium. This despite the prohibition that exists in national and European laws. The law is not equal for all.

They know well that the Italian people want to reclaim their sovereignty, and have decided to dethrone them all; none of them have been loyal to the social compact; and thus, they are thinking up some system to win the election by any means, in order to maintain their privileges.

Privileges that cost the Italian people blood, sweat, and tears. Italian parliamentarians have the highest salaries in the world (despite the fact that they have been asked to lower their pay many times by representatives of the people). At the end of only one term they have the right to a pension of several thousand euros a month, while from on high, they continue to raise the retirement age for ordinary people, even those who work in strenuous manual jobs.

They have taken over the legislative system which

1. The [Guardian](#), May 25, 2012.

they use for their own personal benefit; they are the legislators of themselves. They appoint the members of the Supreme Court of Cassation, the Auditors Court, and the Constitutional Court.

A continuous exercise of abuse of law, constitutional illegitimacy, the mandate of popular representation, for which they feel no shame whatsoever.

So, we are in a war. A subtle, invisible, almost intangible war, that is not fought with armies in the streets, but by much more sophisticated means: finance, which with its tentacles has by now reached every segment of social and political life, both nationally and internationally. A weapon able to trigger widespread extermination. Poverty, fear, the constant need to simply survive, finish the job.

Today, here, I want to call on all of you, who represent your countries, and in particular the representatives of the countries of Europe: We must embrace a single political philosophy, cancel all of the treaties of *this* European Union, create national banks; restore the separation between commercial banks and speculative investment banks in the private sector.

Restoring the Glass-Steagall Act as proposed by Mr. LaRouche and Movisol [the Italian LaRouche movement—ed.], can no longer be delayed. Mr. LaRouche’s campaign has reached Italy as well, where three bills have been introduced in the Parliament.

Commercial banks are necessary for the economic system of a country, but if we don’t succeed in separating them from speculative investment banks, all of the real economies will die.

We must sit around a table and conceive a *true European union of peoples*, drive out the servants of the financial lobby and the multinational corporations; free our lands, our peoples, from this oligarchy which has oppressed us for too long, and that by now has also spread throughout the European and national institutions.

We must reconstruct those values of peace, liberty, and democracy that are dear to us all; defend them, never again allow the repeat of the abominations we are currently seeing.

Only then will there be a future for us and the coming generations.

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