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Italy: Berlusconi's Blunder

Silvio Berlusconi has recently made too many actions that have resulted in a loss of political capital for him. His ratings are down, his policies are not being enacted, and his legitimacy overall as a leader is falling. This situation is occurring not only in Italy, but also internationally, and as a result, many scholars believe that he may not survive as Prime Minister for much longer.

As *The Sun (England)* depicts, "The coalition in Italy is in danger of collapsing after the leader of the Northern League party threatened to withdraw." Implications of this could result in a shift of power to the other main left-wing coalition. This could cause an influx of political instability in a country that is already facing difficult economic stability issues.

Berlusconi is also facing the possible future of his political influence shrinking as he meets the end of his term as Prime Minister. "Massive defeat in four referendums last weekend on nuclear energy, water privatization and trial immunity for ministers were the biggest blow in an annus horribilis for the prime minister that many analysts say signals the start of a new era" (The Toronto Star). At least when Berlusconi is in office, Italy will have the ironic sense of certainly knowing that something uncertain will occur. Now they may face a country and the European Union without the distraction of a leader without media influence.

In *The Observer (England)* article, the reemergence of the infamous magistrate, Di Pietro, has allowed Italy to experience at least minor reforms to the levels of corruption. In the proportionately long-winded title, “A campaigning magistrate is ready for the kill after his latest victory over the prime minister,” Di Pietro may actually finish the chapter of the Berlusconi policy of abuse of the Italian parliament.

Meanwhile, admits the confusion, Angelino Alfano, became the PDL justice minister. Many analysts see this as a sign that Berlusconi may be finishing his career as a public figure, but only time will tell. “Many have their doubts, arguing that this current fin de régime moment could drag on for longer than we think” (The Irish Times). On the other hand, this could be a tactic of holding on to power, for Berlusconi, through the position that Alfano holds.

And to make matters even more confusing, *The Herald (Glasgow)* shows that the European Union is struggling with the decision to further support economic difficulties in Italy. “If that member is also the currency zone’s third largest economy, talk of bailouts can become fanciful with frightening speed” (The Herald Glasgow). Imagine bailing out Spain, Greece, and Italy simultaneously; this is not a great depiction of a stable coalition between European countries – economically.

The overall picture in Italy is normal. Perhaps that is the one silver lining of the recent events. The final red flag of drastic change in Italy and Europe could very well be the loss of normality and instability in Italy.

Work Cited

Berlusconi's 17 years of dominance draw to a close - The Toronto Star

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New dauphin unlikely to dethrone Italy's 'roi soleil' - The Irish Times

Old foe closes in on Berlusconi after 15-year feud: A campaigning magistrate is ready for the kill after his latest victory over the prime minister - The Observer (England)