

Capital Big Winner in Italy Elections

anon.

1976

The results of the Italian parliamentary elections held June 20 and 21 toppled the predictions of political forecasters (including us; see FE last issue, June 1976) that the Italian Communist Party (PCI) would emerge as the greatest vote getter. As it turned out, the Christian Democrats (DC) maintained their place as Italy's largest party although the Communists increased their vote totals more than 10% from the elections held in 1972 for Senate and House of Deputies seats.

The DC led by 38.7% to 34.4% for the PCI in the House and 38.9% to 33.8% in the Senate for those who are counting. The vote differences were due mainly to the youth vote for the PCI in the lower house which permits voting at age eighteen, but does not grant it to voters until age 25 in the Senate races.

Almost all sides seemed happy about the results. The leader of the decrepit and corrupt Christian Democrats, Benigno Zaccagnini, whose party has dominated Italian politics for 30 years, called the vote for his party "a notable advance."

The DC expressed confidence that its strategy of stressing the "fear" issue paid off. Many Italians were convinced by DC election propaganda that if the PCI was voted into power, it would never leave. It appears from the drop in vote totals of the smaller right-wing parties such as the Liberals and Neo-Fascists, that many of their members voted for the DC to assure a Communist defeat.

The Communists similarly trumpeted the election results as a victory for their strategy—total capitulation to Italian and world-wide capital. PCI leader Enrico Berlinguer hailed the results as a vindication of his policy of a turn toward "moderation"—a guarantee of the party's respect for private property and the NATO imperialist military alliance.

Also, while significantly increasing the strength of his party, Berlinguer does not have to face the consequences of forming a government with the international ramifications that such a situation would have brought.

Happy Capitalists

The Italian capitalists are happy. *The New York Times*, June 23, quotes Giovanni Agnelli, president of the Confederation of Italian Industry, that "international friends could rest easy that Italy did not choose a left-wing solution." Agnelli's "international friends" Henry Kissinger and Gerald Ford both expressed pleasure that "the non-communist and non-Fascist parties won a majority," yet Kissinger still expressed concern that the Communists might be invited to join a coalition government.

Pope Paul VI, the reactionary head of the multibillion dollar Catholic Church, expressed his satisfaction that the voters had rejected "a negative orientation of protest, of subversion, of egotistical democracy." No one asked him what he meant by the latter phrase, but the faithful rarely quiz the Pope.

The big question now confronting the DC is whether or not they will be able to form the 39th post-war government without the participation of the Communists. The PCI still are pressing for their so-called "Historic

Compromise”—a grand coalition that would rule Italian capitalism and exclude only the Neo-Fascists. The DC refuses this saying the election results were a mandate against such a move. The process of forming a new government is expected to take several weeks from this writing and could pose ever more crises for the Italian political scene.

The focus on the political maneuvering of the politicians of Italy obscures on one hand the authentic revolutionary activity of Italian workers, but does focus sharply on the issue of the State and politics itself. The only question posed by the elections in Italy is, who shall the rulers be? If one sees that as the only set of alternatives—shall I be ruled by politicians calling themselves Christian Democrats or ones calling themselves Communists—the context is indeed limiting.

Politics is a special category of activity concerned with the rule of others, the administering of the affairs of others and, always we are told, in our best interests. In reality, neither the PCI nor the DC will operate in the interest of any other force other than capital and the rewards they receive as its steward.

The political road is circular leading back always to the authority of the capitalist state and its officials. Revolutionary activity lies outside of this path and would put an end to all politicians, political parties and the State itself.



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