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1 Why Italians are still willing to vote for Berlusconi

In an english speaking forum, Berlusconi was bashed as a "pig" and an Italian said

You would be amazed if you could count the enormous amount of people still supporting him, despite the clarity of the allegations against him. I guess we are a too young democracy yet.

to which I answered that the allegations of the prosecutors are not all that strong. This provoked the following question.

Now, tell me, Hartmut: does it happen anywhere else something like that? Do other Presidents transmit video messages every day?

Does it seem to you a democracy should allow and tolerate this? But, above all, would you define this democracy?

to which I answered,

I have heard Berlusconi's messages as well as many of those from his most competent hobby prosecutor, Marco Travaglio. I've also seen lots of video messages of Merkel and Medvedev. It's not a bad way for politicians to talk to the public. The problem with Berlusconi's recent weekly messages is that he keeps lambasting the judicial institutions without even properly substantiating his claims. Napolitano, Casini and Bersani react to this quite well, without the moralising and swearing that anyway doesn't work.

I don't think the "concussion" charge is well founded, nor is the Ruby case proven. What is really damaging is the overall picture of a loose lifestyle where lots of pretty young women are his friends and flatterers and receive

generous gifts and are sometimes, probably at their own initiative and not directly prompted by any particular payment, available for sexual favors. Even if this kind of courtesanery does not exactly correspond to the term "prostitution" used by the prosecutors (and doesn't justify their massive surveillance actions nor the resulting public labelling of the concerned women as "prostitutes"), it makes Berlusconi appear to be a decadent or narcissistic satrap who has lost touch with reality and on whom therefore nobody should bet his political career. The danger to him thus comes from the decrease of confidence of his own court more than from that of the public. The public may still vote for the center-right camp regardless of who leads it, as long as it delivers a stable government that does not raise taxes.

The attitude of the Italian voters on the whole does not seem less mature to me than the attitude of those whose interest in politics is limited to what in Italy is widely called "justicialism", i.e. outrage about alleged private vices of individual politicians combined with the enjoyment of a sense of superiority over those compatriots who still vote for them and the hope that lawcourts will prevent them from doing so.

2 De Gaulle über die Hirngröße unserer heutigen Vordenker

Ein berühmtes Zitat des Generals, über dessen Kontext Michael Stürmer kürzlich schrieb, ist in deutscher Übersetzung aufgetaucht.

Heute sollten diese Aussagen zu Binsenweisheiten geworden sein. Doch wer dergleichen äußert, wird ggf von den Spitzen des Staates, der Parteien und der Medien aus hohen Ämtern (z.B. bei der Bundesbank) verjagt und womöglich mit Strafanzeigen überschüttet.