

The EU doesn't like democracy

The news from Italy takes my breath away. The President has vetoed one of the appointments to Ministerial office because he has expressed some Eurosceptic views, in line with the views of the winning parties in the election. He wishes to impose a government of unelected officials instead, which is unlikely to command the confidence of the Italian Parliament. He is challenging the winning parties to vote his government down and go for another election, when the results of the last one were clear and produced a potential coalition government with an agreed programme.

As the leader of the Lega has said, this is a direct assault on democracy and threatens a constitutional crisis. I am not an Italian voter and do not agree with some of the things Lega and 5 Star say, but I do see why their coalition programme wishes to cut taxes and boost the incomes of the poorest, and how the voters expect some change of approach. For the last decade the Italian economy has languished with little growth and high unemployment. The Euro scheme offers more of the same.

Their problem is simple. To do what they want they either need substantial reform of the Euro system, or they need to take their country out of the currency. The EU is determined to block either of these courses, and has allies deep within the Italian establishment to prevent change. It was this feeling by electors that the scheme did not work and the traditional parties were not prepared to challenge it that led to the election results. Now the establishment intend to make it worse by seeking to thwart the will of the voters. The Euro scheme needs to have better ways to route money from rich to poor and from surplus to deficit countries. Its refusal to provide the grants and loans on the scale needed is leading to the demolition of traditional parties in the zone, and to a clash between those who want reform and those who defend every detail of the Treaties and Euro architecture.