

Being Anti-Trump Isn't Enough - The US left and some lessons from Berlusconiism

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Silvio Berlusconi's tenure reminds us that the Left needs to attack the neoliberal center, not just the populist right.

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Just months after the left seemed poised for a historic breakthrough, a shock national vote brought a dangerous reactionary to power. Smashing open the old party of the Right, the billionaire tycoon's populism surfed a wave of anger against the corrupt elite that had long controlled the political center. Making government the stage for a permanent public performance, this curiously wealthy popular champion radically reshaped the country's political life.

Such was the scene in Italy in 1994 as Silvio Berlusconi took power amid the ruins of Christian Democracy, the Catholic conservative party which had long dominated national government. In power since World War II, the Christian Democrats collapsed together with their Communist rivals at the end of the Cold War, and it was Berlusconi's Forza Italia that filled the void. But Italy's new right was no mere rebranding of the traditional conservative party — it was a novel coalition stretching from the tycoon's business associates to populists and ex-fascists.

Since November many have suggested that the nine years of Berlusconi rule scattered between 1994 and 2011 were Rome's own "Trump moment." Italians often rue their record in "exporting" such lamentable phenomena as 1920s fascism and 1990s Berlusconiism, and indeed there is much to learn from what this new right achieved in its homeland before spreading abroad. This is all the more important when we consider that Berlusconi was not, as his opponents expected in 1994, simply exposed as a charlatan upon reaching high office. Rather, he succeeded in making lasting changes to Italian political life, including the near destruction of the Left.

The Berlusconi comparison should be understood within its specific limits. The United States in 2017 is not the same as 1990s Italy. Today there is turmoil and political realignment across the globe, but we can hardly assume that the weakest links in the chain are holding up to the more powerful and stable states a mirror of their own future. Berlusconi's Italy and, on the other end of the political spectrum, Syriza in Greece are test beds for broader dynamics, not models which later parties or leaders are doomed to copy.

Still, in the face of a potentially much more dangerous Trump the US left would do well to learn some lessons from Berlusconiism.

A Time of Monsters

Berlusconism's origins lay in a systemic crisis, with the early 1990s collapse of a political order based on the Cold War binary pitting Christian Democrats against Italy's second party, the Communists. While Italy had nearly fifty governments between 1947 and 1992, each one of them was a coalition based on the dominance of the center to center-right and pro-NATO Christian Democrats, designed to keep the Communist Party from ever reaching power.

Forming a continual series of cabinets that balanced its internal factional interests and those of its episodic coalition partners, the Catholic and anticommunist Christian Democracy built up a vast network of corruption, patronage, and links with organized crime, sure of its permanent ownership of the state.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 destroyed this system, breaking up the Cold War dynamic on which it was based. As the 1991 collapse of the Communist Party [\[1\]](#) in turn dissolved the Christian Democrats' own internal solidarity, a far-reaching judicial inquiry was launched, the so-called "Clean Hands" investigation into the "Bribesville" practices long sustained by Italy's "blocked democracy."

Swamped with accusations of fraud and bribery, the Christian Democrats dissolved just two years after their historic Communist rival. Unscathed by this scandal due to their Cold War-era exclusion from high office, the majority of the Communists now reformed as the Democrats of the Left, and from 1992 to '94 this new social-democratic formation looked to be on the brink of power.

Fearing the Left reaching office for the first time since the coalition governments of 1944-47, the Right sought a new standard-bearer. A candidate soon emerged to save the ruling class from the discredit into which Christian Democracy (and smaller allies like the centrist Italian Socialist Party, PSI) had dragged it. Their hero was billionaire media mogul Silvio Berlusconi, in the early 1980s associated with the (only nominally "socialist") PSI but now the frontman of the populist right. He stood independent from the discredited Christian Democrats (rebranded the Italian People's Party) and was also fiercely hostile to the ex-Communist Democrats of the Left. Entering the field in January 1994, he promised a continuation of free-market and pro-NATO policies while replacing the corrupt individuals who populated the Italian government.

Berlusconi's victory at the March 1994 election despite his total lack of political experience succeeded not only in heading off the Democrats of the Left but also in radically reshaping the Right. Organized around a single charismatic leader, his newly created Forza Italia was a media vehicle created from the top down and promoted through Berlusconi's own TV channels. It was more like an American party than anything seen in the postwar Italian context.

Whereas the Christian Democrats had participated in the anti-Nazi Resistance of 1943-45 and for the most part repudiated any fascist presence in government over subsequent decades, Berlusconi had no such scruples. With the historic parties of Italian democracy disappearing in the early 1990s, the barriers to the far right were effectively removed, and they were soon welcomed into his new coalition. In the 1994 election, Forza Italia's eight million votes were complemented by five million for the "post-fascist" Alleanza Nazionale and over three million for the Lega Nord, a hard-right party seeking to detach the wealthier North of Italy from the "lazy," "corrupt" South. Together they dominated the new parliament.

Prominent figures in Berlusconi's coalition had links to the most explicit historical fascism. Alleanza Nazionale was a 1994 rebranding of the Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI), the fascist party created in 1945 by surviving lieutenants of Benito Mussolini's Nazi-puppet Italian Social Republic. Alleanza Nazionale leaders such as Gianni Alemanno (1970s MSI youth organizer and theorist of its most

radical, “revolutionary” wing; 2008–13 mayor of Rome), Gianfranco Fini (who in 1991 described himself as a “fascist for the 2000s”), and Alessandra Mussolini (the dictator’s granddaughter, in 1994 MSI candidate for mayor of Naples) would over the next decade move from being ministers in Berlusconi’s coalitions to members of his party. While the 1990s creation of Alleanza Nazionale was itself an attempt to mainstream the far right by shedding its fascist baggage, these figures along with Berlusconi continued to relativize the crimes of the Mussolini regime, transgressing the norms of postwar Italian democracy.

Above all an opportunist, Berlusconi’s policies in government were, however, characterized not by creeping fascism but a continuity with prior Christian Democrat administrations.

Beyond such decisions as abolishing inheritance tax and a botched attempt to create a two-party voting system, Berlusconi’s rule was notable less for economic and institutional reforms as for his use of office to protect his personal business interests. This principally centered around measures designed to remove constraints on media monopolies (the “Gasparri Law”) and protect him from prosecution for crimes like fraud, massive tax evasion, and paying a seventeen-year-old for sex.

Romano Prodi, today a leading figure in the Democratic Party, denounced Berlusconi’s obsession with passing “ad personam” legislation aimed at protecting himself from jail time. His rule was thus mostly remarkable for a tedious soap opera of court appearances, appeals, and counter-attacks against what he labeled a politically motivated caste of judges.

Hoping that the courts would punish Berlusconi for his dubious business dealings, the center-left merely mirrored his attempt to polarize Italian politics around his own persona rather than questions of general interest or economic recovery. Following the sweeping “Clean Hands” trials and the emergence of judge-politicians like Antonio di Pietro (in 1993–94 a lead prosecutor against Berlusconi’s friend Bettino Craxi, and later founder of the liberal “Italy of Values” party and minister in Prodi’s government), prosecutors and corruption charges increasingly took the place of substantial political issues in left discourse.

Consider the example of the country’s antiwar movement. Italy had the world’s largest demonstration against the Iraq War, as three million people took to the streets of Rome on February 15, 2003. Yet the Democrats of the Left consistently abstained on all bills relating to Berlusconi’s decision to send troops. The Italian left more broadly never made the invasion’s disastrous failure a key criticism of the media magnate, as it had become for George W. Bush and Tony Blair.

Indeed, during the post-2008 European crisis the Democratic Party (formed by the Democrats of the Left and fragments of the old Christian Democracy in 2007) even adopted positions favoring much harsher budget cuts than Berlusconi himself, attacking him for his “unseriousness” in conforming to the European Central Bank’s austerity demands.

There was, of course, political substance to even the moral and personal criticism of Berlusconi. Trump’s claim in the second presidential debate that his failure to pay federal income tax was “smart” echoed a key theme of Berlusconiism, namely the swaggering billionaire’s attempts to pose as just like the “little guy” (i.e., small businessman/patriarch) who wants to put his foot down in his business and family without state interference. He spoke less the language of the “strongman” à la Putin than of unfiltered individual self-interest, thus detaching neoliberal ideology’s underlying conception of human behavior from its typical association with managerial-centrist government.

Faced with critics who were often themselves of dubious financial propriety, Berlusconi took the poison out of their accusations with his own brazen, almost “honest” admission that he was working purely for personal advantage. Already in the 1980s he had notoriously built up a close relationship

with PSI premier Bettino Craxi, who fled into Tunisian exile in 1994 to escape corruption charges. The case against Craxi included the help his government had given the media tycoon in expanding his TV networks. Yet in his own time in office Berlusconi was unabashed in pursuing this same agenda, merging the role of statesman into his higher calling as an entrepreneur.

Berlusconi's maintenance of a "straight-talking" public persona and throwback machismo went hand in hand with his frequent provocatively sexualized, racist, and misogynistic jokes. His rancid public statements ranged from defending his paying for sex with a teenage girl — "Better fancy beautiful girls than be gay" — to his claim that it would be impossible to combat street rapes "because we would have to deploy as many soldiers as there are pretty girls, and our women are too beautiful." In a 2003 intervention at the New York Stock Exchange that perhaps summed up his whole worldview Berlusconi declared, "Italy is now a great country to invest in . . . Today we have fewer communists, and those who are still there deny having been one. Another reason to invest in Italy is that we have beautiful secretaries."

As with Trump, some of his more famous "gaffes" merely put the unspoken assumptions of Western policymaking into unduly direct terms. After 9/11 this future participant in the Iraq War made clear the chauvinism that underpinned the war on terror: "We should be conscious of the superiority of our civilization, which consists of a value system that has given people widespread prosperity in those countries that embrace it, and guarantees respect for human rights and religion. This respect certainly does not exist in the Islamic countries."

Faced with a non-politician turning public life into the stage for his crass performances, the center-left [2], however, proved unable to propose a political alternative that went beyond decrying Berlusconi and his malign associates.

After the system-wide collapse of the early 1990s, to accuse him of "bringing his office into disrepute," of undermining the "democratic spirit of the Constitution won through the Resistance," or even of being a "fascist," made little impression on an Italian public weary of both such pieties and the continual media revelations of scandal, crossing party divides.

Moreover, given the Democrats of the Left's open embrace of the Blairite-Clintonian Third Way [3], with the party's former Communist leaders now abandoning the legacy of Antonio Gramsci [4] in favor of managerial neoliberalism, they had no basis to oppose him with an alternative economic agenda. Stathis Kouvelakis has aptly noted the macabre spectacle of former Communist leader Achille Occhetto visiting Wall Street and the NATO headquarters to declare them the homes of civilization and democracy.

Subordinate to the *antiberlusconismo* underpinning the Democrats, even the radical left effectively played into the tycoon's hands. This was most marked in the actions of Rifondazione Comunista, formed by those activists who opposed the dissolution of the Communist Party in 1991. A promising force in the 1990s, regularly receiving up to 10 percent of the vote and establishing solid social movement links, Rifondazione was ultimately destroyed by its obsession with *antiberlusconista* ideology.

An endlessly repeated analogy with Communist policy in the 1943–45 Resistance — in which the party had allied with socialists, liberals, Christian-Democrats, and monarchists against Nazi German occupation — over time came to justify an infinitely broad, barely political front against Berlusconi. Rifondazione entered into repeated electoral and governmental pacts with the Democrats on this basis, during Prodi's 2006–8 administration even voting for the war in Afghanistan in order to prevent the government collapsing and Berlusconi regaining power.

Demoralizing its own membership (and even expelling those who refused to vote for the war in parliament), Rifondazione was heavily punished at the 2008 general election, when Berlusconi returned to government and no Communist MPs were elected for the first time since World War II.

The Worst Product of Berlusconi: Anti-Berlusconism

Indeed, while Italy's historically strong Communist Party [5] and social movements had begun their slow decline already in the early 1980s, anti-Berlusconism was the instrument by which the followers of Blair and Clinton diverted the Italian left from an agenda of social change to an essentially moralistic-judicial conception of political legitimacy. The weakening of Italian trade unions following the defeated 1980 strike at the massive FIAT Mirafiori plant in Turin — the country's largest factory and historic bastion of the labor movement — was compounded at the turn of the 1990s with the final collapse of the Communist Party and the neoliberal triumphalism that soon followed.

As elsewhere in Europe, this weakening of social struggle was the context in which a new "classless" left emerged. The rearguard action against Berlusconi would prove to be the decisive pretext for the Democrats of the Left's efforts to form a corporate-liberal Democratic Party, explicitly imitating the US model. Refashioning the Communists' historic veneration of Italy's postwar republican institutions, they came to portray Berlusconi as an "abnormality," external to the constitutional establishment.

Initially formed by the majority of Communists who voted to dissolve the party in 1991, across the following two decades the Democrats of the Left consistently moved to the right in an effort to win conservative voters from the "illegitimate" Berlusconi. Whereas the old Communist Party had always had some elements tending toward social democracy, the 1990s fragmentation of the Christian Democrats allowed this zombie incarnation of the Left to devour a series of Catholic and conservative forces also opposed to the billionaire.

In government from 1996 to 2000 and 2006 to 2008, the center-left coalitions led in turn by former left-Christian Democrat Romano Prodi and ex-Communist Massimo d'Alema included not only the Democrats of the Left, Greens, and small Communist groups (and Rifondazione as an external ally) but also the continuity Christian Democrats (the Italian People's Party) and center-right Republicans. Another party in the Prodi coalition was Italy of Values, a liberal force led by anti-Berlusconi prosecutor Antonio di Pietro.

Finally reaching office in 1996 after decades of Christian Democratic rule, the center-left however did nothing to challenge the historic right-wing domination of the state. Upon arriving in his new role, Prodi's ex-Communist interior minister Giorgio Napolitano promised police chiefs he would do nothing to seek out the "skeletons in the cupboard," as he and his comrades sought to create a new party of order. By the late 2000s the Democrats would invite even ex-fascists like Fini into the anti-Berlusconi camp.

Outside of such parties, there were important social struggles during Berlusconi's rule. The anticapitalist movement at the turn of the millennium — in Italy largely built around social centers — created a growing number of community and activist spaces and reached its peak at the 2001 G8 summit held in Genoa, where over two hundred thousand people demonstrated in defiance of a police lockdown of the harbor city.

Hosted by Berlusconi, the summit would become a lasting icon of the antagonism between the social movements and the Italian state. Indeed, the murder of twenty-three-year-old protester Carlo

Giuliani by a policeman, as well as aggressive nighttime police raids on buildings where demonstrators slept, made the Genoa events comparable even to the appalling violence orchestrated by the Italian governments of the 1970s.

Chanting Mussolini-era anthems and slogans as they brutalized hundreds of arrested protesters, the police certainly showed their sense of what was at stake politically, the ring of steel around the neoliberal leaders' summit giving them their chance to beat down the activist left. Yet even so far as extremism in Italian police ranks has fascist overtones, a center-left determined to display its "responsible" credentials utterly failed to support the targeted activists. Even an attempt to launch a public inquiry into the *fatti di Genova* was sunk by Italy of Values's insistence that it also investigate protester actions.

As the powerful but brief surges of anticapitalist and antiwar mobilization dissipated over the 2000s, Italian liberalism increasingly settled into its own moralistic-judicial battle against Berlusconi, devoid of any wider social content. This was true not only of the Democrats but also of separate so-called "citizens" movements' against Berlusconi such as the *girotondi* ("human chains") protests starting in 2002, or, from 2009 *Il Popolo Viola*.

These mass citizens' demonstrations organized on Facebook claimed not only to be non-partisan (except for their self-described "antifascist" anti-Berlusconism) but to stand only for the Constitution itself. Calling a "No Berlusconi Day" in 2009, *Il Popolo Viola* issued a call to demonstrate that deemed Italy an "anomaly in the democratic West," intoning that the country had become "what foreign press call a 'dictatorship'" led by "a man hostile to all forms of free expression." While not enjoying the Democrats' support — and claiming to embody a direct form of "citizen expression" not "mediated by parties" — even this more street-based "march for civic values" reflected a basically similar idea of anti-Berlusconism, an ethical crusade standing above social or political interests, beyond the values expressed in the Constitution.

Grimly warning of the coming fascism, the spokespersons for Italy's supposedly class-neutral "citizen initiatives" enjoyed fulsome praise in the English-speaking business press. This owed not least to the Berlusconi government's bizarre legal row with the *Economist* (deemed by the Italian premier a "communist" publication) and liberals' own reference to the negative image of Italy in such organs as the *Financial Times* to declare that theirs was "not a normal country."

Such liberal handwringing however proved distinctly lacking in democratic probity. Following the most recent general election in February 2013 *la Repubblica* co-founder Barbara Spinelli launched a petition, signed by anti-establishment luminaries such as the late Dario Fo, calling on the courts to refuse Berlusconi his seat on account of his conflicts of interest. Spinelli's attempt to fell the leader of the second most popular electoral coalition was unsuccessful, though the following year she renounced her own pledge to refuse her seat in the European Parliament, before abruptly quitting her party and then keeping the salary.

In 1975 Pier Paolo Pasolini had characterized the Communist Party as an honest, uncorrupted "country within a country," and in that same decade its ascetic general secretary Enrico Berlinguer sought to associate the Left with moral "austerity" as he denounced rising consumerism and political scandal. In a very real sense the postwar Communists did form an Italy apart, not only in winning a third of the vote at national elections, leading mass trade unions, or setting up millions-strong cooperatives, but also in brandishing the platonic progressive sentiments of Italy's 1948 Constitution even despite their own exclusion from office.

However, as this community and workplace organizing withered during the 1990s and Communist politicians became neoliberal Democrats, this in-group mentality morphed into a hollow liberal

elitism, redefining opposition to Berlusconi as the new marker of republican virtue, able to embrace even his right-wing and Catholic-conservative critics. This was notably expressed in the slogan that Italy ought to become a “normal country,” the demand that other European states help unseat Berlusconi, or the meme that he was a “national embarrassment.” Such sentiments went hand in hand with the center-left’s increasing embrace of the European Union as a cure for the country’s ills.

The rise of this elitist-institutional instinct across the liberal left reached its most extreme conclusion in the behavior of Giorgio Napolitano, president of the republic between 2006 and 2015, a Democratic grandee who had long sought an external benefactor to resolve Italy’s dysfunctions. Beginning his political life as a fascist student hoping that Nazi Germany could be Italy’s benign protector, a belated Stalinist turn in 1945 saw him turn his allegiances to the Soviets, before he became a staunch supporter of the European Union in more recent decades.

Although the Italian presidency is supposed to be a neutral guardian of the Constitution, Napolitano instead used his office to promote an EU-driven coup against Berlusconi’s elected government, punishing the premier for failing to meet European Central Bank budget-cutting targets. As Perry Anderson has explained, Berlusconi was removed from office by basically unconstitutional means [6], under EU pressure that the Left would find outrageous if applied to almost any other leader.

Conspiring with Angela Merkel and incoming European Central Bank chief Mario Draghi, over the summer of 2011, Napolitano worked to position former EU commissioner and Goldman Sachs adviser Mario Monti as premier. Appointing Monti a senator for life in November 2011, Napolitano intended to form an unelected government of technocrats to carry out *la manovra*, slashing the budget deficit without those involved ever being accountable to the electorate. As Anderson recounts, “Under threat of destruction by the bond markets should he resist, Berlusconi capitulated, and within a week Monti was sworn in as the country’s new ruler, at the head of an unelected cabinet of bankers, businessmen and technocrats . . .” Those who had long attacked Berlusconi for subverting Italian democracy didn’t seem to mind.

The supposed “fascist” Berlusconi thus fell victim to an antidemocratic coup. Beyond the Monti administration’s role in implementing a slew of anti-labor and budget-cutting “reforms,” this maneuvering was a lackluster success even within the narrow terms of keeping Berlusconi out of office.

When the country did again go to the polls in February 2013, the Democrats again failed to win a majority. Unable to form a government, they squared the circle by forming a grand coalition including none other than Silvio Berlusconi. Having used the need to fight Berlusconi as the stick with which to discipline the Left, the Blairites now combined with him in government.

Today Italy remains ruled by a coalition of the Democrats and center-right splits from Berlusconi’s party; the media tycoon himself left the ruling coalition at the end of 2013 when it failed to guarantee him immunity from prosecution. The rising opposition, in the aftermath of a historic victory in December’s constitutional referendum [7], is dominated by the populist Five Star Movement [8] and hard-right Lega Nord.

Despite the 1990s folding of the historic MSI into Berlusconi’s coalition, “anticapitalist” fascist movements like CasaPound/Lotta Studentesca today make increasing headway among alienated youth. While the activist left clings onto life, only in isolated areas has it been able to galvanize the mood of social revolt mostly hegemonized by Five Star and the Right. In the wake of its 2000s disasters, Rifondazione Comunista today barely exists.

Building a Political Opposition

The lessons for the American left are clear. US Democrats who, having long insisted that only Hillary Clinton was “moderate” enough to break conservatives from the “fascist” Trump, now speak of “national unity” and “owing him the chance to lead.” They are just as rudderless as the Italian Democrats who beat the drums of *antiberlusconismo* before combining with Berlusconi in 2013.

Barely more clarity comes from those liberals who more intransigently deny Trump’s “legitimacy” and see his administration as an unprecedented advance for white supremacy.

The justified fear of Trump’s future actions blinds progressives to even the most recent American history, with the actual victims of the Obama or Clinton administrations suddenly rendered nonexistent and the great history of black and working-class struggles made a mere adjunct to calls to rally round corporate liberalism.

The point is not that Berlusconi or Trump today are mere paper tigers, “only as bad” as what went before. Rather, it is that pandering to their “honest conservative” opponents or painting them as foreign to mythologized national values has no chance of success.

We should know this. Not just because of the harmful effects illustrated by the Italian case, but because we saw it fail in the United States on November 8. Exactly these arguments were the entire basis of Hillary Clinton’s lesser-evil campaign.

To persist in the “offended liberal defends institutional values” approach to politics is to disregard everything we see all around us, from Brexit to Duterte to Le Pen to Trump. It is to imagine that the attempt arbitrarily to define the boundaries of “legitimate” political discourse can dam a wave of populist reaction.

Of course, American politics are more deeply racialized than Italy’s, and the stakes are also far higher. Governments in Rome have long served as a border sergeant for the European Union, even outsourcing this responsibility to Berlusconi’s long-time ally Colonel Gaddafi in Libya. Casual racism, the exclusion of ethnic minorities from almost any aspect of public life, and the lack of “political correctness” are hallmarks of Italian society, and in their own way more extreme than the US scenario.

Yet with its lower levels of immigration, relative lack of established ethnic-minority communities, and weaker traditions of black political organization, organized white backlash is also less present in Italy. While many call Trump a fascist in order to paint him as extreme and illegitimate, the armed racism of the US right — including within the police — is already a far more pervasive physical threat to minorities than Italy’s own fascist-nostalgic subculture. Political forces similarly toxic to Berlusconi’s allies now rise to power in the United States in a situation of much more dramatic social tension.

In this regard the Italian case presents a dire warning, even despite Berlusconi’s ultimate ejection from office. Today as the Democratic Party-led coalition continues its program of tearing up postwar labor rights, detaching his party from any vestigial attachment to the Left, the mass opposition to him comes not from social movements or Rifondazione Comunista, but an individualist and often ugly populist reaction, winning huge support even in the historic “red” bastions of Northern Italy.

Where the Democrats have moved to occupy the centrist and center-right political space now left by Berlusconi’s ailing party, the leftists who joined their anti-Berlusconi crusade now lie in ruins. Instead of a Podemos or Syriza, 2010s Italy has the Five Star Movement and Lega Nord — an anti-

political revolt shaped not by social struggle or a vision of progress, but atomization, reactionary “common sense,” and even xenophobia. It got Trump, not Bernie.

The Left’s alignment with neoliberal centrists against Berlusconi did nothing to thwart right-wing populism or keep racism out of politics. It guaranteed these forces’ unchallenged hold over millions of voters, while destroying its own alternative voice. Looking over the wreckage of the 2016 campaign, the US left must avoid making a similar mistake.

David Broder

P.S.

* Jacobin. 3.28.17:

<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/03/being-anti-trump-isnt-enough/>

* David Broder is a translator and a member of the Historical Materialism editorial board. He lives in Rome, where he is researching a PhD on dissident communists in the Italian Resistance

Footnotes

[1] <https://newleftreview.org/II/51/lucio-magri-the-tailor-of-ulm>

[2] ESSF (article 39616), [The Dangers of Anti-Trumpism – The Italian experience on how not to resist an authoritarian demagogue](#).

[3] <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/02/atkins-dlc-third-way-clinton-blair-schroeder-social-democracy/>

[4] <https://www.marxists.org/archive/gramsci/>

[5] ESSF (article 40889), [Italian Lessons – On the history of the Italian Communist Party](#).

[6] <https://www.lrb.co.uk/v36/n10/perry-anderson/the-italian-disaster>

[7] ESSF (article 39676), [After the Italian referendum: “Everything Will Change”](#).

[8] ESSF (article 39617), [Losing Ground – Italy’s Five Star Movement and the Left’s weakness](#).