

# POST-GAZETTE

(Formerly LA GAZZETTA del MASSACHUSETTS)

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## GRIDLOCK!

### Exasperated by Austerity Italians Elect a Parliament Charged with Anti-European Resentment and Bound to Stalemate

by Stefano Salimbeni

So Italy voted and made a mess ... again! This time, though, it is not only impacting the country but also stock markets around the world — hit by the news of the Italian election results like a shock wave on Monday, scared to various degrees of drops and plunges. It began with Wall Street, where the DOW had the lowest closing in four months (-216 points). Ripples followed through Asia and finished in Europe, with the Milan stock market losing a full five percent on Tuesday, right off the bat. The reason a national vote raised so much global concern can be found in the explosive combination of two worrisome keywords: gridlock and euro-skepticism.

Let us start from gridlock — Italian Style. Usually bad by definition, when it occurs in a so-called “parliamentary



Pierluigi Bersani

democracy” — where parliament not only passes laws but rather chooses everything from the presidents of the two Chambers, to the cabinet of ministers all the way to the president of the Republic — gridlock can be more paralyzing than in other variations, such as presidential democracies (like the US) or semi-presidential ones (like France).

This time, the gridlock is of the worst possible kind, as it involves three party coalitions with almost equal weight and no declared intention of allying with each other to form a parliamentary majority (and a fourth one which has the intention - but not the seats).



Silvio Berlusconi

Basically, the Italian election boiled down to a four-horse race: the PD (the Democratic Party and its allies, the heavily favorite center left coalition headed by Pierluigi Bersani); the PDL (People of Liberty and its allies — including the Northern League, — a center right coalition headed by billionaire media mogul and four-times Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who in only two months of savvy campaigning managed to recover a huge portion of his lost consensus); the Movimento 5 Stelle (Five star movement, a populist, grass roots movement inclined to radical reform and intending to “clean house,” headed by former comedian Beppe Grillo); the Lista Monti (Monti list, a centrist moderate group supported by economic elites and Catholics headed by the current Prime Minister Mario Monti and aimed at continuing its pro-Europe fiscally responsible agenda).

Then came the results: numbers no one dared fully forecast but many — inside and out of Italy — had feared. It was basically a tie between the Bersani and Berlusconi coalitions, each with little more than 29 percent of the vote (with a tiny 0.4 percent edge for the former); a huge success for the Grillo Movement at over 25 percent and a just as big defeat for the Monti coalition, which barely made the minimum required number to have seats in both Houses with 10 percent of the vote.

In fact the “impossible majority” concerns only the Senate, where seats (and bonus seats for winning parties) are awarded on a regional basis. In the House matters are simpler: with the current electoral system



Giuseppe “Beppe” Grillo



Mario Monti

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But it is not enough. In the Senate the winner of each region is awarded a number of bonus seats, proportional to that region’s population. Hence, as it happened last Monday, if Italy’s 20 regions are split between the two major parties, no one reaches the magic number of 158 Senators. And if there is nobody else willing or able, or both, as is currently the case, to form a post election alliance, nothing gets done. Nothing!

To make matters worse, especially in the eyes of foreign governments and markets, is the fact that, although moving from very

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## News Briefs

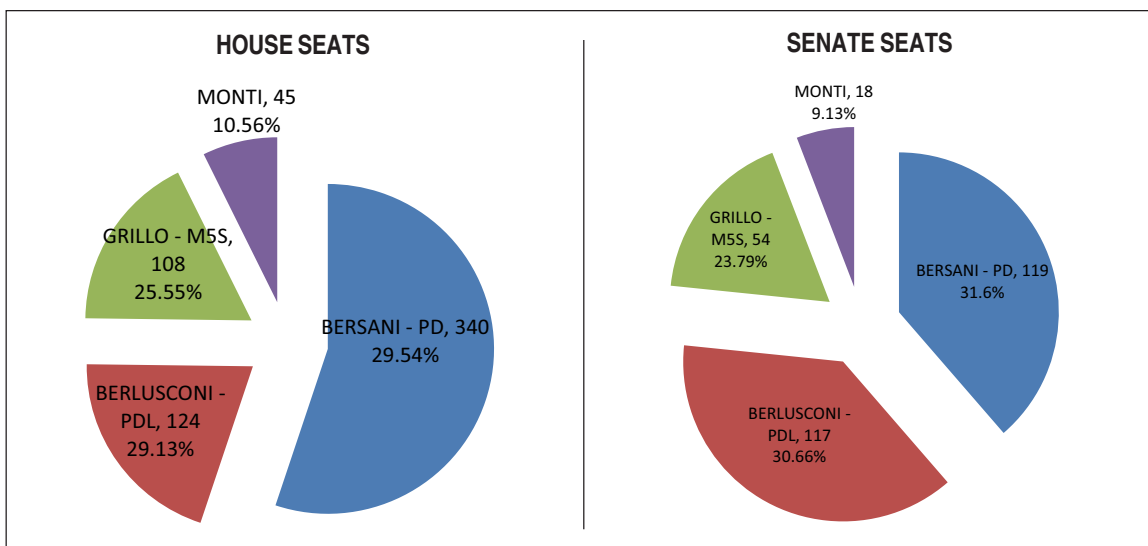
by Sal Giarratani

### No Question that the Ft. Hood Attack was Terrorism

Thanks recently to ABC News and Nightline, the the Obama Administration’s position that the shooting at Ft. Hood was simply “workplace violence” has been discredited and has negatively impacted the victims in the vicious attack. Thank you ABC for doing the right thing here. I guess the mainstream media isn’t as far in the tank for Obama as I thought it was. Victims of the Ft. Hood shooting say they have been neglected by the military, “betrayed” by the president and denied full benefits in the name of political correctness. I listened and watched Kim Munley, one of the two police officers who confronted Ft. Hood shooter Major Nidal Hasan when he shouted “Allahu Akbar” and opened fire on U.S. soldiers. Thirteen people died that day and thirty-two others shot in that November 5, 2009 rampage at that Army base in Texas.

Munley was shot three times when she and her partner Sgt. Mark Todd confronted Hasan. Munley was down and Sergeant Todd fired back helping bring down Hasan. According to news sources, three years after getting a hero’s welcome at the State of the Union Address, Munley says the president broke his promise that the victims would be taken care of. Looking back three years when she sat next to Michelle Obama during his address to

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**THE POST-GAZETTE SATELLITE OFFICE IS NOW OPEN AT 35 BENNINGTON STREET, EAST BOSTON**

This office is open on **Tuesdays** from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM and **Thursdays** from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM, for the convenience of our East Boston and North Shore clients and contributors

Call **617-227-8929** for more information



## LaSumma Ristorante

30 Fleet Street, Boston

invites you to celebrate

### Our Sicilian Tradition Feast of Saint Joseph Dinner

Join Us on Sunday, March 17, 2013 from noon to four o'clock in the afternoon. Enjoy the Delicacies of Our Heritage. Fennel and Orange Salad, Broccoli Rapé and Beans, Calamari Salad, Assorted Frittatas, Stuffed Artichokes, Pasta Sarde, Pasta Mollica, Assorted Traditional Desserts, Fruit, Nuts and Coffee.

\$50.00 per person tax and tip included. By reservation only - Call 617-523-9503 - Seating is limited. Credit Cards accepted.

## North End Waterfront Health

### Expanding Van Transportation Services to the Community

North End Waterfront Health is expanding the hours of its van transportation service for locals who need help getting around. The vans are now available to transport community members to local appointments from **8 am to 5 pm**. (Previously, the vans were in use from 9 am to 2:30 pm.) For scheduled rides for local appointments such as trips to MGH, a nominal fee will be charged. Please call to reserve a spot, as the van has limited capacity. To schedule an appointment or get further information, please call Diana Tanso, Transportation Supervisor, at 617-643-8089.

Beginning March 1st, North End seniors can also use the van for **FREE** trips to Market Basket in Chelsea. No reservation

is required for this free service. Here is the schedule:

#### MONDAYS

**Villa Michelangelo**, 1 Michelangelo Street

Pick up: 12 noon Drop off: 2:00 pm

#### WEDNESDAYS

**Christopher Columbus/Ausonia**,

Commercial/Fulton Streets

Pick up: 12 noon Drop off: 2:00 pm

#### FRIDAYS

**Casa Maria**, 130 Endicott Street

Pick up: 12 noon Drop off: 2:00 pm

North End Waterfront Health is committed to providing services to North End and Waterfront elders, including homemaker services, and home visits.

## MIT Museum's Seventh Annual Cambridge Science Festival

The MIT Museum celebrates the start of the seventh annual Cambridge Science Festival on Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> with a variety of hands-on activities and demonstrations. Beginning at 10:00 am, the day's programs will feature video and board game designers, scientists from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and interactive kid's activities. All special programs are free with Museum admission. Visitors may also view

the new exhibition, *Hidden Heroes, the Genius of Everyday Things*. The exhibition highlights 36 everyday objects that have endured the test of time and influenced the quality of everyday life.

During the 10 days of the Festival, the MIT Museum will host a wide range of activities for young people and adults. For a complete listing of events visit [web.mit.edu/museum/programs/festival.html](http://web.mit.edu/museum/programs/festival.html).

### • Gridlock (Continued from Page 1)

different, almost antipodal premises, both Berlusconi and Grillo based their electoral rhetoric on widespread mistrust and disappointment for the German-led European Union and the Euro which many (whether rightfully so or not) consider the main culprits of their economic hardships. They blame the rigor policies that being part of that system requires and that Monti so zealously implemented. In fact during his "technical"

(Monti was appointed, not elected) one-year government, Italy recovered most of its lost international credibility, at the cost, however, of a general impoverishment of its citizens.

As a result, the parliament stemmed from last weekend's vote actually has more than half of its members who belong to political forces that in various shapes, forms and with different levels of intensity, have publicly questioned or

disowned altogether Italy's belonging to the euro zone (to the point, in Grillo's case, of calling for a referendum on the common currency). Not only the country was a founding member of the Union, but it is currently its second largest manufacturing economy (after Germany) and the third largest altogether. No wonder stock markets in Europe and around the world are throwing a fit.

Now, according to the Constitution, President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano, at 85 years of age and near the end of his mandate, has the daunting task of designating the most likely party leader to form a majority able to support some kind of stable government. Needless to say, he has to do it quickly, as the longer the uncertainty lasts the worse it is for the economy. Whoever that leader will be (probably Bersani at this point) has two difficult aisles to reach across; one between him and a party with diametrically opposed views on just about anything, and another between him and a movement that never hid its intention of sending politicians as their main slogan says "tutti a casa" (everybody home). Unfortunately, the only easy aisle to cross, the one leading to Monti, and his meager dowry of 18 senators, is also irrelevant.



Come Celebrate the Induction of

**JOSEPH ANDRUZZI**

Former New England Patriots Player

**SEAN STELLATO**

Former Professional Football Player / current Sports Agent

into the

**National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame**

Massachusetts Chapter

and

2013 Man of the Year

**FRANK PRIVITERA**

at the

**Induction and Scholarship Award Dinner**

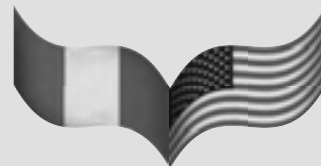
**Saturday, March 9, 2013**

**Venezia - Boston, Massachusetts**

Cocktail Reception - 7:00 p.m. Dinner - 8:00 p.m.

Donation \$99.00 per person

For tickets or further information call Pam ..... 781-956-7441



2013

ANNO DELLA CULTURA ITALIANA  
YEAR OF ITALIAN CULTURE

## 2013 YEAR OF ITALIAN CULTURE BOSTON - PROVIDENCE PROGRAM

**UNTIL JUL 14** | RISD Museum, Providence. Exhibition "The Festive City." **PROVIDENCE**

**FEB 7 - APR 18** | Wolk Gallery, School of Architecture and Planning, MIT. "L'Aquila, 2010." Exhibition of photographs by Michele Nastasi. During the exhibition on March 21 | Conference "The Suspended City: Rebuilding L'Aquila After the Earthquake of 2009." **CAMBRIDGE**

**MAR 5** | Save Venice Lecture Series: "Venice and its Biennale: Art Out of Time." **BOSTON**

**MAR 8** | American Academy of Arts and Sciences. "Rita Levi Montalcini: The Woman, The Scientist." 6:00 PM. 136 Irving Street, Cambridge, MA. Mandatory (free) registration at <http://montalciniboston.eventbrite.com>. **CAMBRIDGE**

**MAR 11** | Dante Alighieri Society of Massachusetts, "Pinocchio, Storia di un Burattino." 7:00 PM. 41 Hampshire St., Cambridge, MA. Performed by Massimiliano Finazzer Flory. **CAMBRIDGE**

**SPRING 2013** | University of Rhode Island and Dartmouth College, New Hampshire. "Preeminent Italian Female Authors" featuring Dacia Maraini (RI) and Clara Sereni (NH). **PROVIDENCE & HANOVER**

**SPRING 2013** | De Chirico Exhibition. **PROVIDENCE**

**APR 5-6** | Shubert Theatre. Spellbound Contemporary Ballet performs "Lost of Words" and "Downshifting." **BOSTON**

**APR 9** | MIT. "Celebration in Honor of Franco Modigliani." Speakers: Robert Solow (Nobel Laureate) and Robert Merton (Nobel Laureate). **CAMBRIDGE**

**APR 21 - JUN 30** | Museum of Fine Arts. Exhibition "Michelangelo: Sacred and Profane Master Drawings from the Casa Buonarroti." **BOSTON**

**MAY 7-8** | City Hall. Barrique "The Third Life for Wood." **BOSTON**

**MAY 9** | Dante Alighieri Society of Massachusetts. "On the Road with Dante Alighieri." **CAMBRIDGE**

**MAY 20 - JUN 28** | City Hall. "Looking for Hemingway." Exhibition by Franco Azzinari. **BOSTON**

**JUN 4** | "Pinocchio, Storia di un Burattino." Performed by Massimiliano Finazzer Flory. **PROVIDENCE**

**JUN 11** | Berklee College of Music. Concert by Enrico Rava and his Quintet. **BOSTON**

**JULY** | "La Notte della Taranta." Part of the "Outside the Box" Festival. **BOSTON**

**SEP - OCT** | Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University. "New Italian Cinema," in cooperation with Cinecitta' and Harvard Film Archive. **CAMBRIDGE**

**FALL 2013** | Harvard University. International Conference on "Galileo and Sunspots." Organized by Museo Galileo, Firenze Istituto Nazionale di Astrofisica, Harvard University in cooperation with NASA. **CAMBRIDGE**

**OCT 2013** | PIB Seminar Series: "Italian and American Policies on Biomedical Research." **BOSTON**

**OCT 2013** | Center for European Studies, Harvard University. "Salvemini Colloquium" on Italian history and culture with Prof. Massimo Salvadori. **CAMBRIDGE**

**OCT | 2013** Emmanuel College. "The Meaning of Machiavelli's Prince." Lecture by Prof. Maurizio Viroli (Princeton). **BOSTON**

**NOV 23** | Brown University. International Prize: "Boccaccio Afterlife." In cooperation with the American Boccaccio Association (ABA) and the Town of Certaldo on the occasion of the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Giovanni Boccaccio. **PROVIDENCE**