INTRODUCTION: THE FALTERING TRANSITION

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Unravelling the knots of Italian politics was as elusive a task as ever in 1999. But the key thread, if anywhere, is to be found in the interwoven themes of the creation of the D'Alema government in October 1998 (and its subsequent political fall-out), the difficulty of reforming the electoral law, and hence the hyperfragmented party system, and the short, sharp crisis of the D'Alema cabinet just before Christmas 1999. Short though the crisis was, it jumbled up politics once more and left new loose ends that will gradually unwind themselves in the coming year.

Political Jostling

Having become prime minister as the result of a traditional bout of parliamentary plotting,¹ D'Alema spent most of the first half of 1999 beating off the sustained and insistent attacks on his leadership launched by the deposed former premier, Romano Prodi, and his supporters. Even after Prodi had been nominated to the Presidency of the European Commission on 24 March 1999, the *Democratici per Prodi* (Democrats), which adopted a somewhat Disneyesque donkey as their electoral symbol, continued to jab at D'Alema from a distance. With a view to the looming European elections in June, the Democrats were anxious to raise their politi-

cal profile with the very many people who had criticised both the manner and the fact of Prodi's defenestration from Palazzo Chigi.

The NATO intervention in Kosovo (fully analysed in this volume by Osvaldo Croci), however, brought about a lull in the squabble between Prodi and D'Alema and allowed D'Alema, after a few initial wobbles, to show off his leadership qualities by keeping Italy firm in its loyalty to its treaty commitments. Paradoxically, though not too paradoxically, the intervention in Kosovo also influenced domestic politics in a second way, by shaping the deployment of the referendum campaign for electoral reform (discussed, below, in Mark Donovan's chapter). Campaigners for a 'Yes' vote were obliged to fight for the attention of the media and public opinion and faced an unexpectedly difficult job in getting their voice heard. The referendum's opponents, who from the beginning knew their only hope was that the referendum might fail to reach the legal threshold for approval, were greatly assisted by the electorate's distraction by the war. The minor parties, and certain factions within Forza Italia, also had an even bigger prize to aim at. They hoped that the referendum's failure to reach its quorum would lead to the election of a supporter of proportional representation (PR) as President of the Republic.

This was because the political debate surrounding the referendum campaign had somewhat improperly, and in a way that is hard to comprehend, linked the election of the President, which was scheduled for May 1999, with the outcome of the referendum. By this line of reasoning, a 'Yes' vote for the abolition of the proportional quota in the electoral law would have favoured the election to the presidential palace of a campaigner for a bipolar, majoritarian democracy, while a failure to reach the minimum threshold would have strengthened the chances of the minority in the country opposed to such reforms. In this second hypothesis, the likelihood was that the presidency would go to a member of the *Partito popolare italiano* (Italian Popular Party: PPI). The PPI's secretary, Franco Marini, with excessive self-confidence and willingness-to-please, said he was happy to put forward 'any man or woman' the other parties liked, but was by strange coincidence himself the best-placed candidate his party could offer. It is also probable that the PPI was counting upon a secret and unwritten rule. Having delivered the prime minister's office to D'Alema, they, as the second-largest party of the governing coalition, could allegedly expect to obtain the presidency for themselves.

These intricate political games (which are described more fully in the chapter by Gianfranco Pasquino) were, however, shaken up by the rise of a widespread and cross-party campaign for the election of a woman candidate to the presidency. In particular, support had gath-

ered around the candidacy of Emma Bonino, a member of the *Partito Radicale* (Radicals: PR) and an incumbent European Commissioner. Moreover, resistance was growing among the *Democratici di sinistra* (Democrats of the Left: DS) to the idea of entrusting the presidency to yet another Christian Democrat. After seven years of president Cossiga and seven of Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, nominating a member of the PPI meant that the *Democrazia cristiana* (Christian Democrats: DC) and its heirs would have had uninterrupted control of the post for twenty-one years. The secretary of the DS, Walter Veltroni, was also hoping to relaunch the drifting ship of institutional reform by involving the opposition in the search for a suitable candidate.

Had Veltroni and the rest of the government majority put forward the name of a member of the PPI, it is unlikely that the opposition would have given much support. The prospect, however, of the presidency being decided, as in the previous election in 1992, by a prolonged and contentious series of parliamentary ballots, at a time when the country was at war, genuinely alarmed both Veltroni (and D'Alema) and the more responsible leaders of the Opposition. Accordingly, when Veltroni nominated the Treasury Minister, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, the *Polo della libertà* (Liberty Pole) made a commendable and rapid show of support that both thwarted the PPI's schemes and caused the election on the first ballot of a widely revered candidate.

With Ciampi's election to the presidency, the two men most responsible for Italy's arduous entrance to the Euro – Ciampi himself and Romano Prodi – had received their just deserts in a way that rarely happens in politics, still less in Italian politics. Moreover, the cross-party support expressed for President Ciampi seemed like a harbinger of further cooperation between the government and the Liberty Pole over institutional reform. At least in principle, Ciampi, whose personal political history led observers to assume that he would look favourably at reforms intended to render a bipolar, majoritarian democracy, seemed like a much-needed ray of hope for gloomy institutional and electoral reformers depressed by the failure of the referendum. It is hard to tell which of the subsequent multitude of political initiatives in the field of constitutional reform were caused by Ciampi's election. But it is a fact that the leader of the *Alleanza nazionale* (National Alliance: AN), Gianfranco Fini, mobilised his party in pursuit both of a second attempt to abolish the proportional quota in the electoral law (this, along with nineteen other causes was also backed by the Radicals) and a new attempt to abrogate the recently passed law on the public financing of political parties (discussed in the chapter by Véronique Pujas). In addition, during the autumn parliament finally passed a law insti-

tuting the direct election of regional presidents. This law, which might and should have been passed four years earlier, was a prerequisite for any reform turning Italy into a federal state. It is still by no means certain that any step towards federalism will be taken.

The European Elections and their Consequences

Deprived of the presidency, which they had regarded as the ace in their sleeve, and under fire from the Democrats, who regarded them as scarcely less responsible than the DS for the plot against Prodi, the PPI plunged to defeat in the June elections to the European Parliament. Marini was forced to resign. Fought, as usual, over primarily domestic issues, and for the most part over petty party political matters rather than questions of 'European' import, the elections for the European Parliament (amply analysed in the chapter by Philip Daniels) were characterised by a successful, though not staggering, debut for the Democrats and a genuinely striking victory for the Bonino list. The (by now) former European Commissioner owed her success to both her presidential campaign and the deservedly high profile she had won for herself during her spell in Brussels. But it also owed much to the skill with which she exploited the badly drafted law on the public financing of the parties to pay for a strident series of television advertisements.

Seeing that the media entrepreneur Silvio Berlusconi also scored a notable triumph for his party, Forza Italia, the government belatedly deduced that the time had come to pass a law (the so-called *par condicio*) that banned political propaganda during electoral campaigns (see the chapter by Véronique Pujas once more). By so doing, it inevitably laid itself open to the charge that it was acting opportunistically. At the end of the year, the parliamentary bill introducing restrictions on political advertising – which Berlusconi exaggeratedly defined as a gag on free expression – was still to be approved by Parliament and had become pointlessly entangled with the fate of a bill on the conflict of interest for holders of public office.

The European elections saw a redistribution of votes within each of the opposing coalitions rather than a victory for one coalition or the other. The AN, the DS and the PPI were particular losers. In terms of votes and mayoralities won, nor did the June local elections show one coalition strikingly ahead of the other, though the Liberty Pole did do slightly better. But as Gianfranco Baldini and Guido Legnante show in their chapter, the symbolic importance of certain victories can overshadow mere numbers. This is why so much importance has been ascribed to the munci-

pal elections in Bologna. In Bologna, a local businessman, Giorgio Guazzaloca, was able to take advantage of the internecine warfare within the centre-left coalition between the Democrats and the DS (which was made all the worse by the fact that Bologna is Prodi's home city), and within the DS itself, to break over fifty years of leftist government in Bologna. Guazzaloca's list, 'Your Bologna', was supported, albeit somewhat reluctantly, by the parties of the Liberty Pole, but it also owed its success to the breeze of anti-party sentiment that had also blown life into the movements organised by Emma Bonino and Romano Prodi. Thus far, Guazzaloca's victory reminds us only that one swallow does not make a summer; it remains a model, however, for the Liberty Pole to follow whenever it has to confront a declining left in its electoral strongholds.²

The Past and its Burdens

Every time Italy voted in 1999 (the referendum on electoral reform, the presidential election, the European elections and the local elections), the two main coalitions trembled. Quite simply, both coalitions are too diverse to be stable. The centre-left, whose composition is particularly incoherent, is especially prone to being twisted apart by the political winds, which are chiefly blowing from two directions. On one side, a wind of possible progress towards a majoritarian and bipolar form of democracy is fluttering the centre-left coalition, on the other, an insidious draught urges a return to a proportionalist system, or, at least, to some of its more nefarious customs (such as cash payments to the parties).

The trial of the former premier Giulio Andreotti, the emblem of the proportionalist democracy of the First Republic, was, despite a show of false modesty on his part, used as an occasion to sing the praises of the former system. Even Prime Minister D'Alema somewhat clumsily acknowledged that the history of the DC and the PSI could not be regarded as entirely criminal. Andreotti's double acquittal by the courts of both Perugia and Palermo seemed at first as if it would give an impulse to hitherto somewhat inefficacious attempts to rebuild the DC, or something akin to it, and to rewrite the history of the First Republic. Yet, as Jean-Louis Briquet accurately comments in his chapter on Andreotti's acquittals, neither the DC nor the history of the First Republic were on trial at Perugia and Palermo and therefore Andreotti's legal vindication cannot be regarded as a political vindication for either the First Republic, or Andreotti himself. The issue of the links between the Mafia and politics remains one that needs to be addressed. Moreover, for all Sil-

vio Berlusconi's violent attacks on the judiciary in general and 'red-robed magistrates' sympathetic to communism in particular, the judiciary continued to show both considerable independence from politics in 1999 and a skilful ability to correct its own excesses.

The enthusiasm displayed by Berlusconi, the PPI and by the *Centro cristiano democratico* (Christian Democratic Centre: CCD) of Pierferdinando Casini, for the acquittal of Andreotti, lasted only briefly and had no political fall-out. Nevertheless, the former Christian Democrats both in the Liberty Pole and the centre-left *Ulivo* (Olive Tree Alliance) did appear to be looking out for a figure able to group them back together. The election in September of Pierluigi Castagnetti as leader of the PPI diminished, but did not eliminate, this tendency. Throughout the year, the two most mentioned candidates for this role were the trade unionist Sergio D'Antoni, who engaged in frequent spats with the government, and the governor of the Bank of Italy, Antonio Fazio, who spoke out sharply over the government's failure to do more to reduce unemployment and taxation.

It is difficult to say how attractive these individuals would be to the electorate. But the mere fact that they are being spoken of as potential leaders signals both widespread dissatisfaction towards the actual party leaderships and the weakness of the political class, which for a decade now has been obliged to recruit its most authoritative figures from outside of the traditional political parties (Ciampi, Berlusconi, Dini, Prodi). The current electoral law, the 'Mattarellum', has the defect of encouraging the minor parties to blackmail their larger partners ruthlessly, but it also tells against the recomposition of a centre party, and, as Mannheim and Sani have convincingly shown, there is little public support for the idea in any case.³ Any new leader would have to seek a home inside one or the other of the major coalitions. Given their seeming 'centrism', both D'Antoni and Fazio could quite easily be recruited by either of the opposing coalitions, which adds just one more Italian anomaly to the list.

One last spasm of excitement was provided for the political class by the publication of a list of Soviet informants contained in the so-called Mitrokhin dossier and by the worsening illness of Bettino Craxi, whose ill health (and subsequent death) was used by the Liberty Pole, the former president, Francesco Cossiga, and the *Socialisti democratici italiani* (Italian Democratic Socialists: SDI) to reopen the argument over whether there should be a commission of inquiry into judicial behaviour during the *tangentopoli* corruption investigations. Silvio Berlusconi's worsening legal position in both Italy and Spain, whose judge Baltazar Garzón informed the European parliament that he was carrying out an investigation against both Berlusconi and his right-hand man, Marcello Dell'Utri,

only raised the tension further. Lashing out in anger, Berlusconi went so far as to accuse leading members of the DS, including the party secretary, Veltroni, of being the masterminds of the judicial plot against him. They sued. Berlusconi may appear to have lost the plot somewhat, but the violence of his reaction was one of several factors which conspired to call the survival of D'Alema's government into question.

The D'Alema Cabinet in Crisis

In fact, the origins of the weakness of D'Alema's government can be traced back to the repeated public requests during the summer of 1999 by the Democrats' chief spokesman, the politics professor Arturo Parisi, for a relaunch of the Olive Tree coalition and a cabinet reshuffle. The Democrats were not against D'Alema's continuation as prime minister, so long as he confirmed his support for the Olive Tree coalition as a concept, but were insistent that he should submit himself, along with all other would-be officials at all political levels, to American-style primaries before he became the coalition's accepted choice. This demand undoubtedly weakened D'Alema and, despite his making a clear expression of his faith in the Olive Tree idea (claiming, for instance, that 'It was I who created the Ulivo'), he was not able to stop the Democrats from continuing to press for the opening of a formal government crisis and for his acceptance of the use of primaries.

Just to confirm that coherence is rare in politics, and especially rare in Italian politics, Arturo Parisi in the meantime had become Romano Prodi's annointed successor for a by-election in the Bologna 12 parliamentary constituency, after a long tug-of-war between the parties that was characterised by the stark absence of any primary whatever. Parisi's candidacy in Constituency 12, in which the Polo stood as its candidate a well-known local doctor, became a symbol of the Olive Tree coalition's desire for a relaunch. The local leaders of the DS were more concerned to avoid repeating the setback of the communal elections. All the Olive Tree's big names – D'Alema, Veltroni, Di Pietro, Castagnetti – 'descended' upon Bologna to support Parisi, who did much less well than Prodi before him and eventually sneaked a narrow victory by a handful of percentage points. The by-election victory thus provided little or no new momentum either for the Olive Tree or for D'Alema's government.

Indeed, all hopes for a 'piloted' or managed government crisis, with a reshuffle taking place after the DS's party conference scheduled for January 2000 and leading to a strengthened administra-

tion, vanished when the leader of the SDI, Enrico Boselli, turned his speech at the SDI's party conference on 10 December into a broadside against the government by demanding not just the opening of a formal government crisis, but the replacement of D'Alema as prime minister. Boselli was apparently acting as spokesman for all those within the Olive Tree coalition, such as former president Francesco Cossiga and the Republican leader, Giorgio La Malfa, who were opposed to relaunching the Olive Tree. Together with the SDI, these two figures had added to the horticultural trend in Italian politics by starting earlier in the year a new mini-coalition called the *Trifoglio* (clover leaf).

A tired and exasperated D'Alema declared that he was not holding office just for the sake of it, but to carry out useful reforms, and demanded 'an immediate and drastic act of political clarification'. He called the bluff of the *Trifoglio* by resigning on 18 December and on 23 December was already in a position to present a new cabinet with the Democrats ensconced in the place of the *Cossighiani*. His first government had lasted 425 days, far less than Romano Prodi's previous administration (861 days). The four-day crisis itself was the shortest in the history of the Italian Republic. Nevertheless, despite its brevity, the crisis had illustrated that certain habits die hard. In the scramble for votes prior to the new government's initial vote of confidence, it was alleged that certain former members of the *Lega Nord* (Northern League: LN) had sold their votes for the round sum of 200 million lire. The distribution of ministerial posts and under-secretaryships, meanwhile, became an exercise in horse-trading, with political copers like Clemente Mastella of the *Unione dei democratici europei* (Union of European Democrats: UDEUR) taking a leading role. Mastella demanded a ministerial post for the former President of the Chamber of Deputies, Irene Pivetti, whose pregnancy perhaps recommended her for the health ministry, but whose expectations were dashed, to her fierce irritation. The PPI struggled to maintain its position as the second party of the coalition, but had to cede Rosa Russo Jervolino's post as Minister for the Interior to the Democrats' Enzo Bianco. Willer Bordon of the Democrats became Minister for Public Works. Most ministers were reconfirmed in their jobs, but Tiziano Treu carried the can for the international humiliations caused by the ongoing Malpensa airport saga by being sacked from the transport ministry. He was replaced in this jinxed position by Pierluigi Bersani (DS), who had been an outstanding Minister of Industry and who took over his new post with scarcely disguised disgust at having to leave his former job half-finished. With the under-secretaries, D'Alema dished out jobs to all and sundry in a

bid to satisfy the appetites of the minor parties in the coalition. In the case of Romano Misserville, an ex-fascist who had passed into the UDEUR and who was rewarded for his opportunism by an undersecretaryship, this generosity rebounded upon the government and caused a scandal that ended only with Misserville's resignation. In all, D'Alema handed out sixty-four undersecretary-ships, not far short of the absolute peak of sixty-nine attained between April 1991 and April 1992 by Andreotti's seventh and last administration.

On 23 December, the Chamber of Deputies rewarded D'Alema with a majority of 310 votes to 287. This already narrow majority would have been even more slender had D'Alema not bought the abstention of the Trifoglio's approximately twenty deputies by promising the parliamentary inquiry into *Tangentopoli* greatly desired by Cossiga and former prime minister Bettino Craxi. The Trifoglio's good will stopped at abstention, however: it threatened to adopt a case-by-case approach to the new government's future legislation. D'Alema had, however, achieved his main goal: surviving until the regional elections in spring 2000, the results of which, he hoped, would inject enough life into his government to enable it to endure until the end of the legislature in 2001. The forthcoming referendum on electoral reform, if it passes, should also reduce the blackmail power of the minor parties by introducing simple plurality voting in all constituencies. Here, however, there is the complication that Silvio Berlusconi has now brusquely adopted proportional representation as party policy, so the referendum will have to be won without the main opposition party's cooperation. Not that cooperation with Berlusconi, in the context of the parliamentary inquiry into *tangentopoli*, is likely in any case. The inquiry will be used by the Liberty Pole for propaganda purposes and to attack the judiciary, which is bound to erode a majority that contains numerous elements whose hostility to the judiciary is well known. In sum, D'Alema's government looks likely to be an 'Andreotti-style' cabinet, (to borrow the unkind but accurate description of the leftist leader Fausto Bertinotti,) whose chief occupation is surviving rather than governing. It is hard to see how it can direct its energies towards passing major social and economic reforms when its ability merely to cling on to office will be permanently in doubt.

Economic Management and Political Responsibility

The parlous state of D'Alema's government, irrespective of whether its formation was yet another instance of the perennial Italian vice of transformism,⁴ has propelled the political parties back to the centre of

the political system. In this regard, it represents a victory for its real architect, the evergreen Francesco Cossiga, who perhaps overestimated the Trifoglio's strength, but who managed to land yet another heavy blow in favour of his personal project to recreate a 'centre pole' that would bring Italy's experiment with bipolarity to an end. This plan already has a great deal of support among the very many former supporters of the DC and the less numerous but more avid ex-Socialists. The key for this plan's success is persuading Silvio Berlusconi to detach Forza Italia from the AN (at least before the elections) by convincing him that such a strategy offers the prospect of a permanent hold on power. From October onwards, Cossiga continually signalled his willingness to move closer to the leader of Forza Italia.

This likelihood of the clock being turned back in this way, to a blocked democracy where there is no prospect of alternation between left and right, depends entirely upon the fate of the upcoming and re-presented referendum on electoral reform in the late spring of 2000. A second defeat would certainly shatter any hopes of putting together an electoral reform guaranteeing bipolarism and might well lead to a proportionalist revision of the 1993 electoral law. Berlusconi's recent shift – after years in which he presented himself as the standard bearer for his own personal vision of a majoritarian, winner-takes-all form of democracy – towards a preference for a 'German-style' electoral law is a significant pointer here. Such a reform could be sold to public opinion as being both progressive and 'European', but it would also be grist to the mill of those, like Cossiga, who are hankering after the old regime.

The political uncertainty described in this chapter has its costs. It is not an accident that Italy's economic growth rate is the lowest in the European Union, or that inflation is starting to creep above 2 percent, bringing in its wake a loss of competitiveness. But a return to a proportionalist past would do nothing to end the lingering political transition hampering the management of the economy. Having said this, such a judgement may be too hasty. D'Alema's government did complete major privatisations in the energy and transport sectors and, as Dwayne Woods describes in his very readable chapter, also bit on the bullet and allowed a hostile take-over of a bastion of the former state sector, Telecom Italia, by a private company, Olivetti, which financed the move with vast loans from a consortium of international banks.

It should also be said that Italian capitalism seemed convinced of D'Alema's ability to run the economy well. The Milan stock exchange enjoyed a boom year in 1999, with the Mibtel index soaring to unprecedented heights. In part, this boom reflected the avidity with which investors were willing to speculate upon the shares

of internet start-ups, but it also owed much to the sound macro-economic management of the government, which kept the public debt under strict control and stayed within the stability pact guidelines for members of the Euro. Deprived by these policies of government debt, savers finally began to turn to the stock exchange in search of higher yields. One wonders whether D'Alema, when he was a militant in the Young Communists, ever expected to preside over the transformation of the Italian economy into fully fledged capitalism; the crucial first step along the much-heralded 'third way' favoured by contemporary socialists.

The government also undertook interesting new initiatives in the labour market and regional development. As Michael Contarino describes in his chapter on the *Patto di natale* ('Christmas Pact'), the government began the year by establishing with the trade unions and the employers' confederation a new agreement for economic development and productivity that carried on the series of reforms in the labour market that began in 1993. Italy is now edging towards the widely acclaimed Dutch model in this field and is doing so, moreover, with a degree of social cohesion that experts believed to be impossible until a few years ago. D'Alema's government also showed great awareness of the problems of the South, but, as Vincent Della Sala shows in his chapter, the state is no longer seeking to resolve them with heavy doses of public money, but with private capital and investment. The new government body coordinating investment in the South, *Sviluppo Italia*, is more like one of the development agencies that have brought thousands of new jobs to the depressed areas of Britain, especially Wales and Northern Ireland, than the old *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* ('Southern Italy Development Fund'). It remains to be seen whether the new body will be able to reproduce the success of its British counterparts in the absence (despite the implementation of the so-called Bassanini laws⁵) of adequate bureaucratic flexibility and a system of civil law that is both effective and rapid. Local government, moreover, is too often indifferent to private enterprise whereas the criminality widespread in southern Italy represents a serious competitive disadvantage with respect to competitors such as Portugal or Wales.

It is worth underlining, too, that the government's main initiatives in the labour market date back to the beginning of the year before the administration was ground down by political infighting. Urgently needed reforms to the universities, the schools, public transport, the public administration are in the pipeline, but unless the political climate improves, they will have to stay there. Each year that passes, the truth identified by Michele Salvati in a

prophetic 1997 article 'Moneta unica, rivoluzione copernicana', ('Single Currency, A Copernican Revolution') becomes ever more evident.⁶ In order to stay in Europe, Italy has got to overhaul its entire economic system: no aspect of society or the economy can escape the process of re-engineering. Italy cannot be an anomaly any longer but must become, to use a phrase of D'Alema's by now as worn out as his government, 'a normal country'.

D'Alema himself has written in the past that the path to normality cannot be through the existing political infrastructure. The austerity of the Amato, Ciampi and Dini governments in the course of this decade, and the fundamental reforms to the pensions system and the labour market instituted since the mid-1990s, were rendered possible by the drastic economic situation that the country was facing. But to strengthen these reforms, and to ensure long-term control over public spending, it is necessary to have, in the long run, governments that govern and that can be punished by a dissatisfied electorate. It is necessary, in other words, that politics should be held accountable and that the political class should itself behave responsibly. The endless political infighting during 1999 has shown clearly that both the parties of government and those of the opposition either do not know how or simply do not wish to take on the burden of that responsibility.

Notes

1. S. Fabbrini, 'From the Prodi Government to the D'Alema Government: Continuity or Discontinuity?' in *Italian Politics: The Return of Politics*, eds. D. Hine and S. Vassallo, Oxford, 2000, 121–38.
2. For the significance of this election see D. Campus and G. Pasquino, 'How to Lose a Mayor: The Case of Bologna', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, vol. 5, no. 1, forthcoming.
3. R. Mannheimer and G. Sani, 'Reassembling the Centre and the Electoral Spectrum', in *Italian Politics: The Return of Politics*, eds. D. Hine and S. Vassallo, Oxford, 2000, 87–100.
4. This accusation was convincingly disputed by G. Sartori in *Il Corriere della Sera*, 30 December 1999. To give some idea of the state of flux in which the Italian parliament finds itself, a useful letter from the Chief Whip of the Verdi (Greens) to the 5 January 2000 edition of *La Repubblica* estimated that the 'Mixed Group' in the Chamber of Deputies contained fifteen Greens, fifteen 'Republican-Federalists', thirteen members of the CCD, thirteen members of *Rifondazione comunista* (Communist Refoundation: PRC), eight Democratic Socialists and six floaters who had been in *Rinnovamento Italiano* (Italian Renewal). This left a further twenty-seven 'odds and sods' including a number of escapees from the Northern League. Rather generously, he stated that none of these people could be regarded as 'runaways or traitors'.
5. For an early appraisal, see Mark Gilbert, 'The Bassanini Laws: A Half-Way House in Local Government Reform' in *Italian Politics: The Return of Politics*, eds. D. Hine and S. Vassallo, Oxford, 2000, 121–38.
6. Michele Salvati, 'Moneta unica, rivoluzione copernicana', *Il Mulino* no.1/97, 5–23.