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Bad Reviews for Prodi's Government in Italy July 31, 2007



House of Freedom (Casa), headed by Silvio Berlusconi.

(Angus Reid Global Monitor) - Many Italians believe the first year of Romano Prodi's administration has been inefficient, according to a poll by Arnaldo Ferrari Nasi published by *Il Giornale*. 59.2 per cent of respondents have a negative view of the prime minister's tenure so far.

Italian voters renewed the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate in April 2006. The centre-left Union (Unione), led by Prodi, secured 348 seats in the lower house and 158 seats in the upper house. The victory put an end to the government of the centre-right

In May 2006, Prodi was formally appointed as prime minister. The Union leader had previously served as head of government from May 1996 to October 1998.

In February, the prime minister tendered his resignation after the Senate rejected his plan to deploy more troops to Afghanistan, and expand a U.S. military base located in northern Italy. Two Communist Refoundation Party (PRC) members refused to vote with the government, and prompted the defeat of Prodi's proposal in the upper house. The prime minister eventually won a confidence motion. 76.7 per cent of respondents think the current government is not leading a fluid and coherent policy due to internal tensions and differences between the parties that form the Union.

On Jul. 26, it was revealed that Italian magistrate Clementina Forleo requested phone records from several top Prodi allies in order to include them in an ongoing inquiry over a bank takeover bid. Foreign minister Massimo D'Alema and Democrats of the Left (DS) leader Piero Fassino are among six parliamentarians on 68 phone calls the magistrate wants to use in her investigation.

Forleo, who is reviewing if there was market-rigging and insider trading on the bid to buy the BNL Bank, said in her submission to Parliament: "(The lawmakers) by all appearances were not passive receivers of information, but knowing accomplices in a criminal scheme."

Polling Data

The government has been in place for one year. How would you rate its performance?

Very positive	5.2%
Moderately positive	25.1%
Moderately negative	25.4%
Very negative	33.8%
Not sure	10.5%

Some people believe the current government is not leading a fluid and coherent policy due to internal tensions and differences between the parties that form the Union (Unione). Do you agree or disagree with this assessment?

Agree	76.7%
Disagree	13.4%
Not sure	9.9%

Source: Arnaldo Ferrari Nasi / *Il Giornale*

Methodology: Telephone interviews with 750 Italian adults, conducted from Jul. 18 to Jul. 21, 2007. No margin of error was provided.