

Naples Health System About To Explode

by Liliana Gorini

July 31—Twelve-thousand workers of the Azienda Sanitaria Locale (ASL), the Naples branch of the Italian National Health Service, have been mobilizing and striking this week because they did not receive their July paychecks, and are likely to miss their August payday as well. In addition to the Campania region, of which Naples is the capital, all of Southern Italy, plus Latium in which Rome is located, are threatened with the shutdown of their health-care systems as a consequence of a Supreme Court ruling that has permitted creditors to seize the accounts of those health-care administrations, which, in Italy, are regional. The seized accounts were released by an emergency decree of the Italian Senate called the “*salva stipendi*” (paycheck rescue), but the problem will return in August.

Hospital workers and nurses organized sit-ins, strikes, and banners to protest, in particular, against the Banco di Napoli which seized the assets of the ASL, violating an Italian law of 1993 which “prevents the seizure of funds aimed at paychecks, medicines, and health assistance” as Ernesto Esposito, head of ASL 1, told the Naples daily *Il Mattino*. Maria Gagliotta, an ASL employee close to Movisol, the LaRouche movement in Italy, wrote a letter to her trade union, UIL (Unione Italiana Lavoro), demanding that it join her fight for a Glass-Steagall reform, since this is the key issue for Naples and the rest of Italy, as it is for Detroit and the United States.

Stefano Caldoro, the governor of the Campania Region, denounced the fraud of derivatives contracts dumped by London on Naples and the Campania region in 2003 and 2006. In an article in *Il Mattino*, titled “Campania, derivatives debts: A special commission will investigate them,” Caldoro is quoted saying, “The priority is defending our citizens,” and to this aim, a special investigative commission was formed, chaired by a lawyer, Luca Zamagni, who has sued British companies for such derivatives contracts, which are in violation of Italian law.

The Battle for Glass-Steagall

It is not only the health system which risks bankruptcy, as *Il Mattino* reports: “It is a time bomb, which will also hit families and small and medium-sized enterprises.” As a result of this situation, only last week, in Naples, three people committed suicide. And it’s not only in Southern Italy. Also in Northern Italy, there were tens of suicides in the last months, mainly small and medium-sized entrepreneurs who did were unable to get bank credit, and could no longer continue to operate their family businesses.

As the chairwoman of Movisol, and as a Neapolitan myself, I wrote to Governor Caldoro informing him about the fight for Glass-Steagall in the U.S. Congress, led by LaRouchePAC, and suggesting that he follow the example of those municipalities in France that won the legal battle against the banks on toxic loans, for example, in Saint Denis. “From Detroit to Naples, this is the same fight, to reinstate Glass-Steagall and create a credit system replacing the present, bankrupt, monetary system.”

The battle for a Glass-Steagall reform is ongoing in Italy. There are five bills to this effect in the Italian Parliament, two in the Chamber of Deputies and three in the Senate. One was introduced in the Chamber of Deputies by Davide Caparini of the Lega Nord (Northern League), who spoke with me at a conference on Glass-Steagall in Brescia during the election campaign; one in the Senate was introduced by former Economics Minister Giulio Tremonti, one by Sen. Giuseppe Vacciano of the Movimento Cinque Stelle (Five-Star Movement); and one by Sen. Massimo Bitonci, which is cosponsored by the whole 16-member Lega Nord faction. According to *EIR*’s sources, members of the Senate Finance Committee will push for a fast-track debate on the Glass-Steagall bills, which can be initiated when one-fifth of Committee members demand it.

There is also a “popular bill” for Glass-Steagall for which Movisol and the Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale (Committee of National Liberation/CLN), uniting various movements and citizens groups, including a new party called Partito Italia Nuova (New Italian Party/PIN) are presently gathering 50,000 signatures all over Italy.

The Movisol-CLN Glass-Steagall bill has been registered in 50 municipalities, including in major cities such as Milan, Bologna, Florence, Genoa, Naples, and Ancona, and many small cities on the Italian coast. Citizens can sign in support of the bill online, at the [CLN website](#). The collection of signatures will continue until the end of October.