

Italy Risks Losing Grip in South with Fear of Looting, Riots

News:

As Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte fights to hold Italian society together through a crippling nationwide lockdown, the depressed south is turning into a powder keg.

Police have been deployed on the streets of Sicily's capital, Palermo, amid reports gangs are using social media to plot attacks on stores. A bankrupt ferry company halted service to the island, including vital supplies of food and medicines. As the state creaks under the strain of the coronavirus pandemic, officials worry the mafia may be preparing to step in.

"We need to act fast, more than fast," Palermo Mayor Leoluca Orlando told daily La Stampa. "Distress could turn into violence." (Source: [Bloomberg.com](https://www.bloomberg.com) 30/03/2020)

Comment:

Italy currently has the highest number of confirmed infections at 120,000 and the highest death toll of 11,000 - and its underdeveloped Southern region is facing the fallout of the four-week long lockdown already.

Hollywood films often depict a post-apocalyptic breakdown of society where people turn to crime and fight to survive as individuals, knowing their governments are incapable or unwilling to do enough. Sadly, this reality is setting in parts of the South as people are running out of money, several cases of burglaries have been reported, and a number of supermarkets have seen an increase in cases of shoplifting. The almost 3.7 million working in the underground economy, taking day-to-day jobs to make ends meet is causing real concern about the re-emergence of gangs, in particular the Mafia. Given that we saw the sales of firearms in America and Australia, as people cued to stockpile weapons, such a worrying scenario is even more likely in cities where crime and corruption is especially rife, and organised crime, drug and people trafficking, and money laundering is prevalent.

In these extraordinary times, it's important to understand the dynamics of society and its relationship with government. When rulers like Trump and Bolsanaro of Brazil, along with many others - fail to act quickly, don't provide adequate funding for hospitals and their staff, or downplay the severity of the virus in terms of whom it can affect, they are actually failing, even oppressing their people. Without complete awareness of people's needs, forcing a lockdown on communities who can't work from home, are less likely to stockpile food and necessities, and who cannot self-isolate effectively because homes are small or already overcrowded, must be understood and responded to correctly.

It's not enough for governments to claim investment in ventilators and protective clothing, if they can't even understand how to fulfil the needs of the people, and think

that by keeping everyone at home, the problem will go away. What about the problems being created?

Fiat currency economies like Britain, are happily throwing money at everyone asked to stay home. Offering sabbaticals and state funded furloughs of up to 80%.... but there is no discussion of how the state will make up for this massive injection of virtual cash and its consequences.

Whereas in America, states like California saw 3.5 million people register as unemployed in less than a week, but still the Trump administration denies the obvious spread of the virus and publicly play with the truth to deflect from their responsibility to the people, so as to protect the economy instead. Several high-ranking Wall Street chiefs even stated that “elderly patriotic Americans would happily give their lives for the sake of the American economy”!

With leaders like this, and others in Central Asian regions who have even banned speaking about COVID-19, what else can be expected than for people to turn to crime or at the very least extreme levels of individualism? After all individualism has been promoted through the freedom loving, liberal values of Capitalism for the last century at least. People who are indoctrinated to prioritise themselves above others and see it as the ultimate progressive value will eventually do anything to look after themselves, even if it negatively affects others.

Under the Islamic system, the Amir al Mumineen is responsible for his people. The accountability that this position brings, forces him to prioritise their needs and investigate the various realities the different demographics face. Also the Islamic concept of rizq is reflected in the Islamic economic system; in that the natural flux between times of prosperity and times of difficulty due to natural disasters or even climatic events, accepts a fluid state of relative wealth and hardship from time to time- rather than the constant demand for wealth creation and material prosperity all the time as Capitalism does.

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